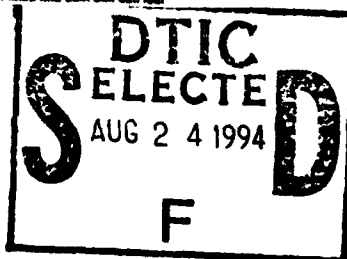


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# *POW/MIA Issues*

*Volume 2, World War II  
and the Early Cold War*

*Paul M. Cole*

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National Defense  
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## *POW/MIA Issues*

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*Paul M. Cole*

*Prepared for the  
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy*

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Research Institute**

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## **PREFACE**

This report consists of three volumes. Volume 1 addresses American prisoners of war (POW) and missing-in-action cases (MIA) who were not repatriated following the Korean War, with particular emphasis on whether any American servicemen were transferred to the territory of the USSR.

Volume 2 examines three issues: First, it examines whether American servicemen liberated by Soviet forces from Nazi German POW camps in the European theater of operations in World War II were not repatriated. Second, it examines whether American aircrews in the Far East and European theaters were detained in USSR territory. Third, early Cold War incidents are examined to determine whether archive materials indicate that American servicemen and civilians were held alive in USSR territory.

Volume 3, an appendix volume, contains a number of POW rosters, primary source documents, and other lists. It is intended to complement Volumes 1 and 2.

Throughout Volumes 1 and 2, the evolution of U.S. POW/MIA policy is documented as are U.S. government efforts to obtain a full accounting of missing American citizens. This report is documented extensively, in accordance with the guidance from the Department of Defense, so that other researchers may use it as a reference work or as a guide to sources. This report is not intended, however, to be a comprehensive history of World War II, the Cold War, or the Korean War.



This report was prepared as a part of "The POW/MIA Issue in U.S.-North Korean Relations," a project sponsored between October 1991 and April 1993 by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. Research for this report was conducted within the International Security and Defense Strategy Program of RAND's National Defense Research Institute, a federally funded research and development center supported by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff.

This report should be of interest to government officials involved in POW/MIA affairs, casualty resolution officers, family members, and others in and out of government interested in the efforts that have been made by the U.S. government to resolve POW/MIA issues.

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## SUMMARY

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

From October 1991 to April 1993, the Department of Defense sponsored two related projects at RAND. The first project provided funding for a six-month study focusing on American prisoner of war/missing-in-action (POW/MIA) issues from the Korean War. A second project expanded the scope and provided additional resources for research into whether American servicemen and civilians were transported to the territory of the Soviet Union or its allies during World War II, the early Cold War, as well as the original subject, the Korean War.

The purpose of this study is to provide documentation from archive sources on the possible fate of unrepatriated U.S. POW/MIAs and to provide documentation of U.S. governmental efforts to obtain information on these individuals and their repatriation.

### MAJOR FINDINGS

An undetermined number of American POWs liberated by Soviet forces during World War II from Nazi Germany POW camps were not repatriated to the United States or otherwise accounted for by Soviet authorities. The identities of six of these individuals are presented in this study as they were found in Soviet-era archives. One hundred ninety-one American POWs known to have been in German POW camps who were not repatriated are identified by name in this study (see Appendix 20). Information from Soviet archives indicates that

Soviet authorities deliberately misled U.S. officials concerning the fate of American POWs.

The U.S. government made extensive efforts to locate and recover the remains of Americans buried in USSR territory. This report contains an update on the status of these graves.

This report identifies 40 U.S. aircraft shot down by Soviet bloc forces during the early Cold War era. In these incidents, 187 American crewmen were recovered alive, 34 were recovered deceased, eight deceased crewmen were not recovered, and the fates of 135 individuals have not been established. This report presents documentation of the U.S. government's conclusion that some of these crewmen were captured alive by Soviet forces but not repatriated. Evidence of U.S. government efforts to obtain the release of these individuals is presented as well.

The number and location of U.S. defectors is presented. Some of these individuals were repatriated. The purpose of this evidence is to suggest the possibility that American citizens who chose to live in the Soviet bloc may have been the subject of live sightings. The Department of Defense noted that the fate of these individuals is of no interest to the U.S. government, thus this report made no effort beyond collecting lists and rosters of defectors.

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Chapter One  
**WORLD WAR II**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter has three purposes: (1) to document U.S. government efforts to account for and recover U.S. POWs held in the European theater of operations; (2) to determine whether American POWs liberated from German POW camps in the European theater of operations were transferred to and imprisoned in USSR territory or that of its allies following World War II; and (3) to examine the question of whether American aircrews were imprisoned in USSR territory during World War II.

The task as defined by the sponsor of this project is to present the facts as they are illuminated by archival sources.

## **U.S. POLICY ON THE RECOVERY OF WORLD WAR II POWS**

### **Liberation, Recovery, Repatriation**

During World War II, the liberation, recovery, and repatriation of Allied prisoners of war held in Europe was one of the goals of the United States and its Allies.<sup>1</sup> The term "Recovered Allied Military Personnel," which came to be known as RAMP's, was the name given to the program designed to account for members the Allied armed

---

<sup>1</sup> *RAMP's: The Recovery and Repatriation of Liberated Prisoners of War, Occupation Forces in Europe Series, 1945-46 (Restricted)* (Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany: Office of the Chief Historian, European Command, 1947), p. 1. Military Reference Branch, National Archives, reference collection No. 2058.

forces who were released in one way or another from enemy prisons in Europe. Each nation at war with Germany accepted the responsibility to liberate, recover, and repatriate the prisoners of all Allied nations. Records show that the recovery of Americans held as POWs received early attention from the War Department; the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force; Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, United States Army; Headquarters, Communications Zone; and in the field forces.<sup>2</sup> This required a commensurate expansion of collection and repatriation facilities.

Before D-Day, a small but continuous flow of American soldiers managed to find ways to get out of enemy territory. "In the beginning, a small hotel in London located at 63 Brock Street had sufficient capacity to process those Americans fortunate enough to escape Nazi confinement and reach England. Later on 9 March 1945 an installation located at the Hotel Francia in Paris provided the means for the care and processing of our escapees and evaders on the continent."<sup>3</sup> The number of liberated POWs burgeoned dramatically in the closing days of the war.

Prisoner of war figures for World War II are enormous, in part because toward the end of the war entire armies were captured. Estimates of the total number of POWs taken by all sides during World War II range from 12,000,000 to 35,000,000. Planning for the care of the thousands who would be liberated after D-Day was a matter altogether different from taking care of the trickle of escapees and repatriates in London. If Germany surrendered before its territory was invaded, entire camps could be emptied with German assistance. On the other hand, if Germany fought on in a hopeless endgame, the problem of protecting and recovering American prisoners would be entirely different. After September 1944, when Allied forces entered German territory, it became known that as the German forces retreated they took their POWs with them, moving the camps to areas between the Allied armies advancing from east and west. This caused enormous hardships on the prisoners and created a new set of problems for the recovery and care of liberated prisoners. The Prisoner-of-War Executive Branch, G-1 Division, Supreme Head-

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<sup>2</sup>RAMP's, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>RAMP's, p. 3.



quarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (known as PWX) issued periodic reports showing the location of POW camps and numbers of prisoners. As of March 15, 1945, the number of American citizens held as prisoners by Germany was estimated to be 76,854. "The preliminary estimates of the number of United States citizens to be recovered were consistently less than the 91,252 actually recovered, owing to the fact that many men carried as 'missing' were later found in prisoner-of-war camps."<sup>4</sup>

In October 1944, instructions from the War Department fixed responsibility for establishing procedures concerning how to handle liberated POWs. The commanding generals in the European and North African Theaters of Operation and the chief of the United States Military Mission in Moscow were instructed to consult with one another and with other Allied commanders to establish proper procedures. In November 1944, the PWX office prepared a "Detailed Plan for the Care and Evacuation of British and American PW's after the Cessation of Hostilities," which later became known as "ECLIPSE Memorandum Number 8."<sup>5</sup> Under the terms of this plan, prisoners who did not stay in camps after liberation were reclassified as displaced persons. The distinction was important because liberated prisoners received priority over displaced persons for evacuation.

The final guidance governing the movement of U.S. and British prisoners, issued on April 4, 1945, provided that evacuation from forward areas should be by air. (This program came to be known as CATOR.) Individual army groups that overran POW camps worked out their own procedures before this guidance was issued. At the end of March 1945, four reception camps (also known as buffer camps) for Allied POWs from western countries were set up at Epinal and Sedan, France; Namur, Belgium; and Borghorst, Germany. The Sedan camp was closed after another camp at Reims, France, was opened. These three camps fed into the staging area at Le Havre, which came to be known as Camp Lucky Strike or RAMP Camp Number 1. In March 1945, "considerable numbers [of Americans] liberated by Soviet

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<sup>4</sup>RAMP's, pp. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup>RAMP's, p. 8. The final version of "ECLIPSE Memorandum Number 8," issued on March 19, 1945, showed "no marked changes in policy from the outline plan circulated in the autumn of the preceding year."

forces and evacuated through Odessa were shipped from Europe to the United States."<sup>6</sup> Camp Wings, an airstrip next to the Le Havre facility, opened on April 7.

By April 30, 14,174 American POWs had been recovered from enemy custody. This figure "included the first contingents of United States prisoners liberated by Soviet forces who had been evacuated through Odessa."<sup>7</sup> The number was so small because the Germans continued to move POW camps as they retreated. The problem was solved by the "Standfast" agreement of April 22, 1945, between the Allies (including the Soviet government) and Germany. The Germans agreed to leave POW camps behind and the Allies agreed that liberated prisoners would not be rearmed or returned to active duty. The Third United States Army overran a POW camp at Moosberg on April 29, liberating in the process 15,568 Americans out of a total prison population of nearly 100,000.<sup>8</sup> This "remain in place" agreement was designed to hold all Allied prisoners in place until arrangements could be made to deal with them in an organized fashion.

### Unrepatriated U.S. POWs Once Held in German POW Camps

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, in a June 1992 letter to the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIAs, noted that "23,000 . . . US citizens," mainly POWs, among "3.5 million foreign citizens" were found in Soviet-occupied territory or otherwise in Soviet custody following World War II.<sup>9</sup> President Yeltsin added that "not all US citizens were brought back home." The Russian president's letter specified that "114 US citizens, mostly of German nationality who had fought on the side of Germany and were taken prisoner with weapons, were court-martialed."<sup>10</sup> President Yeltsin's letter, which was shown sub-

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<sup>6</sup>RAMP's, p. 25.

<sup>7</sup>RAMP's, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup>RAMP's, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup>President Boris Yeltsin's letter to the Senate Select Committee, undated but made public in June 1992.

<sup>10</sup>President Yeltsin's letter offers this accounting: "82 of them were released, 17 died and 3 escaped. The burial sites have been identified with respect to 8 dead. The fate of those who escaped and 12 other US citizens in this category is still being investigated."

sequently to be riddled with errors, is silent on the question of American POWs who were not repatriated after being liberated by Soviet forces from German POW camps.

A roster of American POWs known to be held in German POW camps who were not repatriated or otherwise accounted for was prepared by the U.S. Army Adjutant General. The original list of 191 American POWs is reproduced in full in Appendix 20.<sup>11</sup> The question of whether this is a list of all unaccounted-for American POWs or whether this is a subset of a larger list that has not been located remains to be answered.

### **Soviet Liberation of U.S. POWs from German Camps**

The Supreme Allied Headquarters estimated as of March 1, 1945, that Soviet forces could be expected to "uncover 134,000 prisoners of war of United States and British nationalities and 425,000 of other United Nations."<sup>12</sup> Concern by U.S. authorities for the welfare of American citizens under Soviet control was expressed by late summer 1944. Supplies shipped from the United States to Moscow were earmarked for the American prisoners. Efforts were made by the U.S. Military Mission in Moscow to

obtain an advance agreement on the handling and repatriation of United States liberated prisoners. The United States authorities were anxious at the time to arrange for the appointment of United States officers to serve with the Soviet field forces for the purpose of contacting and identifying liberated prisoners and arranging for their repatriation. The only result of the negotiations was that the Soviet authorities were informed of probable locations and numbers of United States prisoners of war likely to be uncovered by Soviet Forces.<sup>13</sup>

The magnitude of the problem of how to exchange liberated POWs and displaced civilians exceeded the authority of the Supreme Allied

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<sup>11</sup>The U.S. Military Attaché in Moscow made inquiries on behalf of at least five POWs by name: Aho, Brewer, Burton, McLean, and Van Art. All of these men were liberated by Soviet forces from German POW camps.

<sup>12</sup>RAMP's, p. 40.

<sup>13</sup>RAMP's, p. 41.

Headquarters. The number of displaced Soviet civilians, for example, was estimated to be between two million and five million.

An agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union concerning the repatriation of POWs was signed at Yalta on February 11, 1945.<sup>14</sup> The important features of this agreement, an identical version of which was signed by the British and Soviet governments, included the following: (a) It was a government-to-government agreement, not simply a military accord, and (b) the agreement covered displaced persons as well as liberated POWs. "Under the Yalta agreement, all Soviet and United States citizens liberated by the military forces were to be segregated from enemy prisoners of war until an exchange at mutually agreed places was possible."<sup>15</sup> The military authorities of both sides were required to notify the other as to the location and number of liberated citizens. Repatriation representatives from both sides had the right of immediate access to camps or collection points. Each side was obligated to notify the other if liberated citizens were transferred from one camp to another. "Liberated Soviet or United States citizens were to be supplied with adequate food, clothing, housing, medical attention, and transport until returned to their own authorities."<sup>16</sup> The Yalta agreement was consistent with standing Allied procedures for the recovery and repatriation of liberated POWs. The channels of evacuation for U.S. prisoners is shown in Table 1.1.

After the signing of the Yalta agreement (February 1945), Soviet authorities announced that 450 liberated American POWs were in Soviet custody.<sup>17</sup> Soviet and Allied estimates of the total number of liberated U.S. prisoners differed dramatically for various reasons. The number of liberated prisoners outpaced everyone's ability to keep statistics. Also, the Soviet side did not report statistics in a reliable fashion in the view of U.S. authorities. The Soviet authorities proposed to collect the Americans at Odessa from where they would

<sup>14</sup> RAMP's, Appendix IV, "The Yalta Agreement," pp. 135-138.

<sup>15</sup> RAMP's, p. 42.

<sup>16</sup> RAMP's, p. 43.

<sup>17</sup> RAMP's, p. 49.

**Table 1.1**  
**Channels of Evacuation of Liberated U.S. Prisoners**

Channel of Evacuation	Total Evacuated
Camp Lucky Strike	73,175
Great Britain	5,942
Odessa	2,858
Allied Forces Headquarters	47
Medical channels	9,230
Final revised total POWs liberated	91,252

SOURCE: *RAMP's*, p. 26.

be repatriated. By the time the Soviets began to return Americans in March 1945, the U.S. Military Mission in Moscow reported:

1,200 liberated United States prisoners had been assembled at Odessa for early evacuation. The transportation of these liberated prisoners began in early March 1945, British ships being used for the purpose. An American contact team was in Odessa at that time to help in the processing of recovered American personnel. Reports filed at the time indicated that the Soviet authorities were cooperating in this program and faithfully executing the terms of the Yalta Agreement.<sup>18</sup>

Following the Standfast accord of April 1945, Soviet authorities did not permit American contact and liaison officers to advance with Soviet forces into Poland and Germany, a move that resulted in U.S. protests. This also raised doubts as to the accuracy of Soviet reporting on the location and number of liberated prisoners. "As for camps in the Soviet Zone of Germany, the only contact permitted was a single visit to one camp by one liaison officer representing Supreme Headquarters."<sup>19</sup> In contrast, Soviet liaison officers were accredited to Supreme Headquarters, provided with adequate facilities, given access to all camps in which liberated Soviet citizens were held, and given broad control over the internal management of these camps.

<sup>18</sup> *RAMP's*, p. 50.

<sup>19</sup> *RAMP's*, p. 51.

The practical problems of mass repatriation were not resolved completely by the Yalta agreement. On V-E Day, "Supreme Headquarters asked the Military Mission at Moscow to invite Soviet representatives to meet representatives of Supreme Headquarters at Leipzig for the purpose of discussing the exchange of hundreds of thousands of liberated prisoners of war and displaced persons held by both sides."<sup>20</sup> The resulting conference on May 23, 1945, was attended by Major General R. W. Barker, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1; Brigadier General S. R. Mickelson, Chief of the Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Division; and a Soviet group led by Lieutenant General Golubev, Assistant Commissar for Repatriation. The conference produced a "Plan for the Delivery through the Army Lines of Former Prisoners of War and Civilians Liberated by the Red Army and the Allied Forces," commonly known as the Leipzig Agreement, which was signed on May 28.<sup>21</sup>

The Leipzig Agreement, the plan for what many believe to be the greatest mass movement of human beings in history, contained the following provisions: (a) All persons liberated by the respective armies should be delivered through the army lines to the custody of the command on the other side, (b) exchange points, referred to in the document as "reception-delivery points," should be established on both sides, (c) seven exchange points on Soviet territory were specified, including four the Soviets would set up in addition to these seven, two of which would be located in Austria, and (d) Western Allies would provide transportation for the west-to-east transfer of liberated Soviet citizens. By September 1, 1945, over two million Soviet citizens had been moved out of the areas controlled by Supreme Headquarters.

The shipment of healthy American POWs liberated from the European Theater of Operations ended on June 26, 1945, though there were 3,400 former prisoners still in hospitals. Four days later, only 114 remained hospitalized. The "vast majority of liberated prisoners of war of all nationalities except Polish and Yugoslav were repatriated by the month of August. The official end of operations in the repa-

<sup>20</sup> RAMP's, p. 61.

<sup>21</sup> RAMP's, Appendix VI, pp. 148-150.

triation of recovered military personnel was marked by the recession of the Theater standing operating procedure of 1 October 1945."<sup>22</sup>

### **Inquiries About Unrepatriated U.S. POWs**

Mechanisms existed through which an accounting for missing military personnel and displaced civilians could be sought by a variety of government officials and private citizens. The Executive Committee of the Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent of the USSR established a Central Information Bureau in Moscow to locate missing persons, "particularly those displaced by the war."<sup>23</sup> The Bureau announced on July 1, 1945, that it would assist American citizens "making welfare and whereabouts inquiries about persons in the Soviet Union." The Bureau offered its services free of charge and welcomed inquiries directly from persons in the United States. Records exist concerning the inquiries U.S. military and diplomatic authorities made on behalf of dozens, perhaps hundreds of U.S. servicemen who had been either confined on Soviet-controlled territory or unaccounted for after being liberated by Soviet forces from German POW camps. Most of these inquiries began as a result of information provided by family members.<sup>24</sup>

Searches were a two-way street. The U.S. Military Attaché correspondence from Soviet authorities asked that a search be made for unaccounted-for Soviet citizens. The United States maintained "Tracing Bureaus" to assist with searches in the United States Zone, Germany. As of January 7, 1946, the Soviet side had asked for assistance in locating dozens of Soviet citizens. A list of 59 names is included in the U.S. Military Attaché's file. There is no record that any Soviet citizens were located with the assistance of U.S. forces.

During and after the time U.S. POWs were being repatriated after liberation by Soviet forces from German camps, the Office of the Military Attaché at the American Embassy Moscow maintained a file

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<sup>22</sup>RAMP's, p. 33.

<sup>23</sup>Office of the Military Attaché, RG319, Missing Persons (Soviet), 312.1.

<sup>24</sup>There is no record of inquiries made by families on behalf of over 23,000 unrepatriated American POWs or even a significant fraction of such an enormous number.

entitled, "American Missing Persons."<sup>25</sup> The file contains copies of correspondence relating to U.S. government efforts to obtain information from Soviet repatriation authorities concerning reports that American servicemen were being held in Soviet territory or detained by Soviet forces elsewhere. It contains copies of perhaps one hundred letters to and from U.S. and Russian authorities concerning individual American servicemen and entire crews of U.S. aircraft presumably lost over Soviet territory. It is not clear whether this file, which covers the time period of December 1945 to July 1952, is complete in its present form in the National Archives. This information was derived from Missing Air Crew reports and Enemy Evasion Aid Reports that noted when the crew of a damaged aircraft was seen bailing out behind Russian lines. There is no question that many bomber crews survived after parachuting or crash landing in territory controlled by Soviet forces. The U.S. Embassy's efforts to obtain information about American citizens were severely limited by the Soviet position that some American citizens were considered by Soviet authorities to be citizens of Rumania, Hungary, other East European nations or even citizens of the USSR. In these cases, the Soviet government always refused to give the U.S. Embassy even the slightest bit of information in response to inquiries concerning U.S. POWs who in the view of Soviet authorities were not U.S. citizens.

Summaries of other correspondence concerning individual cases are also included in these files. Representative of the type of letter sent to the Russian Assistant Government Authorized Administrator for Repatriation, Major General Basilov, is the following:

OFFICE OF THE MILITARY ATTACHE  
MOSCOW, USSR

17 December 1945  
Major General Basilov  
Assistant Government Authorized  
Administrator for Repatriation  
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Dear General Basilov:

---

<sup>25</sup>RG312.1, "Missing Persons (American)" (Secret Security Information).



Information has been received indicating that Van Art, Lawrence, ASN 13053316, Private First Class (Pfc), U.S. Army, died in a Russian hospital at Landsberg, Germany, sometime between 2 and 5 March, 1945. It is known that at the hospital he was attended by a Russian doctor, Major George Davjebvitch (probably Davidovitch) Arons.

Private Van Art is carried on U.S. Army records as a prisoner of war since 19 September 1944. The last communication received from him was dated 27 September 1944 and was written at Stalag III C. The soldier's prisoner of war number was 92380.

Any information you can furnish us concerning the soldier's status would be appreciated; in particular, grave registration data, if his death is confirmed.

F. N. Roberts  
Brigadier General, USA  
Military Attaché

[The following is handwritten on the copy of the letter.]

- 1) Basic USFET: E-95598/12 Dec/LE
  - 2) Our reply: MA-50158/17 Dec/LE
  - 3) Basilov acknowledgment: #07824/25 Dec/LE
  - 4) USFET F-rep: WB-2744/6 Feb/LE
  - 5) Reply to USFET: MA50310/11 Feb/LE
  - 6) F-up to Basilov: #75/12 Feb/LE
  - 7) Letter from Basilov, "No results": 15 Feb/LE (See Opfer file)
  - 8) Cable to USFET: MA50364/2 Mar/LE
- (CLOSED)

The list of inquiries made by the Military Attaché's office in Moscow is reproduced in Appendix 21.

### **U.S. Aircrews Repatriated via Kamchatka, Tashkent, and Teheran**

American air crews held in USSR territory fall into two main groups. The first group consists of those who were held in Soviet-occupied territory in Eastern Europe. The second group of U.S. airmen includes those who diverted to USSR territory in the Asian operational theater.

In President Yeltsin's June 1992 letter to the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIAs, the Russian leader wrote, "regrettably, one has to note that during World War II years 716 US servicemen were interned on the USSR territory. These were mainly bomber crews who had done forced landings on the territory of the USSR or the countries liberated by the Soviet Army. The Stalin government applied a double standard with respect to those people—some were immediately and with honors handed over to the US side, while other were held in isolation for a year or more." President Yeltsin's letter did not refer to primary source data nor was any information presented concerning a single specific case.

In the Central Archives of the United Air Force of Russia (Department of Foreign Affairs fond) a list of 299 U.S. airmen was located by Russian researchers working for RAND. This is a roster of downed U.S. airmen who at one time were in USSR territory in the control of Soviet authorities.

As of June 1993, no records have been located that illuminate the ultimate fate of the 299 men on the roster located in the Soviet archives. In the archive of the Department of Special Tasks of the Soviet General Headquarters, a list of 330 American fliers who were in Soviet custody in Soviet-occupied European territory was located. Apparently these men were returned to American military control but the data have not been verified. If, as the Russian president suggests, not all of the American fliers were immediately repatriated, these lists could be a guide to those who may not have been repatriated.

During the American air war against Japan, dozens of American aircraft made forced landings in Soviet territory after being damaged by Japanese air defenses. Many of the crew members perished in the crash landings. Others survived and were repatriated during the war in an elaborate operation that involved the Soviet Foreign Ministry and cooperation with the NKVD. This operation was a closely held secret, in part because the Soviet Union, which was not a belligerent at the time in the war against Japan, was obligated as a neutral to hold the Americans as detainees. Unlike the Swedish government, which traded interned Allied airmen to the British government for shipments of equipment and fuel, there is no evidence in the record that the Soviet government engaged in human barter. Thus far, there

is no evidence that the Soviet government received any material compensation for arranging the release of many dozens of American airmen.<sup>26</sup>

Following the Doolittle raid in 1942, American aircrews began to accumulate in USSR territory in the Far East. Many of these men were transported to Tashkent from Kamchatka—a journey of over 4,000 miles—where they were held as internees in a camp near Yangi-UI that was described by American inspectors as “spacious . . . clean and adequate.”<sup>27</sup> In December 1943, there were 61 internees in Tashkent, most of them Navy fliers. Following high-level meetings in Moscow and Teheran, an agreement was made whereby the Soviets would arrange an escape for these men and others detained on Kamchatka. In December 1943 and January 1944, U.S. Ambassador Harriman raised with Foreign Minister Molotov the question of expediting the escape arrangements.

There is no doubt in my mind that it is the intention of the Soviet government to allow the escape of these men, but that they wish to handle it in their own way. Secrecy is obviously of the utmost importance to them both now and when these men are released, may I suggest that this cable be shown to General Marshall and General Arnold for their information, but no action in Washington is indicated.<sup>28</sup>

The War Department, weighing the wisdom of informing families of the internees, finally decided to inform them and ask for their cooperation and discretion.<sup>29</sup>

On February 2, 1944, the head of the U.S. Military Mission in Moscow reported to Washington:

<sup>26</sup>The documents referred to by name in this subsection are found in RG334, Records of Interservice Agencies, United States Military Mission to Moscow, October 1943–October 1945, Subject files: Internees.

<sup>27</sup>*Medical Report of Tashkent Trip*, October 17, 1944, prepared by Lt. Col. Curtis B. Kingsbury, Surgeon, Medical Corps.

<sup>28</sup>From Ambassador Harriman (Urgent Secret), No. 124, to AGWAR, Washington, Subject: Internees, January 2, 1944.

<sup>29</sup>From Marshall (Secret), No. 180, to U.S. Military Mission, Moscow, January 16, 1944.

As a result of continued pressure from Mr. Harriman, Soviet authorities have worked out an elaborate plan permitting the escape of the 61 air corps internees now in Tashkent. They should arrive in Teheran in about two weeks. . . . The Soviet authorities requested, and I agreed, that these men be not returned to the United States immediately. They suggested a period of from one to two months in the Middle East or elsewhere before any of them are returned to the U.S.<sup>30</sup>

Arrangements were made to have the internees processed through Teheran and sent to Algiers as rapidly as possible.<sup>31</sup> Between September 10-25, an additional 28 American airmen landed on Kamchatka. Eleven more who parachuted from a B-29 on November 11 in the vicinity of Ugolovaya, 30 miles northeast of Vladivostok, were not located and recovered by Soviet forces until November 17. All of these men were scheduled to "escape" with the 61 in Tashkent. By December 1944, there were 130 American internees at Tashkent "and more coming from the Far East."<sup>32</sup>

Lt. Col. Robert E. McCabe's *Report of Escape of American Internees* reads like the stuff of spy novels. In summary, the "escape" operation, which had been postponed since December because of publicity in the United States concerning a previous "escape," occurred in the following fashion:

February 2, 1945: Lt. Colonel McCabe received orders from General Deane to arrange the escape of 60 interned U.S. Air Force personnel in conjunction with designated NKVD officers, including Lt. General Ivanov. The arrangements between the Americans and the NKVD were made by the Soviet Ministry of Defense. Other Soviet officers involved were Maj. General Evstigneev, head of the Foreign Liaison Section of the People's Commissariat for Defense, Lt. Col. Myakhotnik of the NKVD, Captain Kozlovski of the Red Army, and Captain Ware of the U.S. Military Mission.

<sup>30</sup>From Deane (Top Secret), No. 181, to AGWAR, Washington, February 2, 1944.

<sup>31</sup>For General Connolly's Eyes Only from Deane (Top Secret), No. 58, February 4, 1944.

<sup>32</sup>From Deane M-22152 (Top Secret), to AGWAR, Washington, December 25, 1944. A roster of all internees in Tashkent as of December 26, 1944, is found in a memo from McCabe (Secret), to AGWAR, Washington, December 26, 1944.

February 3, 1945: McCabe, Kozlovski and Myakhotnik departed as planned for Tashkent. The journey took six days.

February 10, 1945: McCabe gave Deane's false orders to the senior officer among the internees. The false orders indicated that the camp had to be moved to the Caucasus where they would fly Lend Lease aircraft.

February 11, 1945: McCabe concluded that none of the internees suspected the truth. Myakhotnik and Kozlovski informed McCabe that no one in the camp, on the railroad or among the local Soviet officials knew what was really about to happen. "It was apparent that the Soviet security plans were thorough."

February 14, 1945: At 09:00, the entire group of internees intrained into two cars attached to the end of the Ashkhabad train.

February 15, 1945: At 22:30, the head train conductor (actually an NKVD man) announced that due to mechanical problems it would be necessary to cut off the last two cars at the next station. At Ashkhabad, the internees detrained at 04:00 on the 16th. A convoy of trucks provided by the NKVD soon arrived to collect the internees. Accompanied by NKVD border troops, the convoy crossed the Soviet border at 05:30. The trucks were covered, which meant that on the trip to Teheran the only people who saw the internees were Iranian or Russian truck drivers.

February 18, 1945: Arrived Teheran at 04:15 after 50 hours on the road.

February 20, 1945: The former internees departed from the Amirabad camp at 10:00 for Cairo, Egypt.

MCCabe concluded, "The arrangements made by the NKVD and the Red Army and General Connolly's command were excellent. It is doubtful if the plans for security could have been made more airtight. However, the crews themselves were probably doubtful as to whether the escape was real or planned by the Soviets. Events moved so rapidly that the internees were too confused and tired to note everything that occurred. However, the manner in which one event fitted into the next so smoothly must have left some doubt in their minds about the escape."

By October 4, 1944, at least two groups of interned American airmen had been released from USSR territory in this fashion.<sup>33</sup> One of the "escapes," which occurred in February 1944, included airmen who had parachuted or landed in Kamchatka or Siberia.<sup>34</sup> The continuation of the operations into 1945 indicates that these "escapes" were routine, bringing hundreds of American aircrews out of the Soviet Union.

### **POWs TRANSFERRED TO SOVIET TERRITORY**

#### **U.S. POWs Evacuated to and Repatriated from USSR**

According to U.S. sources, the total number of liberated American prisoners of war evacuated through Odessa was 2,858.<sup>35</sup>

#### **U.S. POWs Liberated by Soviet Forces Who Were Not Repatriated**

Amidst the unprecedented disorganization left in the wake of the Wehrmacht's retreat westward, tens of thousands of military personnel and civilians came under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Red Army as it advanced toward Berlin. Among these people were refugees, displaced persons, Allied soldiers, and POWs imprisoned in Nazi German camps. Soviet forces sometimes replaced the prison population with new prisoners of their own choosing rather than closing POW camps.<sup>36</sup> To this day there has not been a full accounting of many individuals who were never heard from again after being liberated from German captivity by advancing Soviet forces.

<sup>33</sup>Memorandum of Conversation. Participants: The American Ambassador, Mr. Harriman, Mr. Edward Page, Second Secretary of the American Embassy, Mr. V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Pavlov, Soviet interpreter (Top Secret), Subject: Interned Aviators, October 4, 1944.

<sup>34</sup>From Deane (Top Secret), to AGWAR, Washington, October 12, 1944.

<sup>35</sup>RAMP's, p. 63.

<sup>36</sup>German camps, such as Buchenwald, were run as prison camps by the Soviets for a longer period of time than they were by the Nazis. Soviet authorities merely filled the facilities with their own brand of prisoner.

U.S. citizens—civilian and military—were not repatriated after being liberated by Soviet forces or, in some cases, after being captured by Soviet authorities. Fred Kaltenbach, son of German immigrants who lived in Dubuque, Iowa, until he moved to Germany after Hitler came to power, broadcast virulent anti-American speeches from Berlin during the war. Following the fall of Berlin, he was “captured by the Russians, who refused to turn him over to the Americans. Perhaps they thought his fellow countrymen would not be as tough on him as he deserved. On this last assignment to Berlin I made inquiries as to what had happened to him. The Americans didn’t know. The Russians wouldn’t say. I presumed he was dead.”<sup>37</sup>

In November 1992, President Yeltsin’s emissary to the Senate Select Committee testified that by directive of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, an undetermined number of American POWs liberated by Soviet forces were “summarily executed” while others were forced to renounce their citizenship.<sup>38</sup> No reference to primary source data or information on individual cases was included in this announcement.

Research at the Center for Historical Documentary Collections in Moscow uncovered information concerning approximately one dozen American POWs who were not repatriated after being liberated from German POW camps by the Red Army. A group of liberated American POWs appears in the register. Among the information on POWs in the fond of the Commissioner for Repatriation<sup>39</sup> is additional data concerning Pfc. Ross Cook in the “American and Englishmen Register of Commandant’s Office No. 88.” The register includes data such as name, place of birth, citizenship, rank, place of detention before liberation by the Red Army, and transit destination.

In this register it is noted that U.S. serviceman Ross Cook was transferred by Soviet forces to the Krakow Commandant’s Office on April 1, 1945. In addition to Cook, the following individuals were, ac-

<sup>37</sup>“This was finally confirmed by the Russians in July [1947]. The Soviet Army Command in Berlin informed the American authorities that Kaltenbach had died in a Russian detention camp of ‘natural causes.’” William L. Shirer, *A Native’s Return: 1945–1988* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990), pp. 39–40.

<sup>38</sup>Michael Ross, “Soviets Executed GIs after WWII,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 12, 1992.

<sup>39</sup>Fond No. 450, Inventory 23, File 250, pp. 38–39.

ording to Soviet records, transferred to the Krakow Commandant's Office:

1. Norman Edward Caterer, U.S. citizen, born 1920, imprisoned March 27, 1943, detained in Lamsdorf 8b.
2. Lorius Cawcause, U.S. citizen, born 1920, unable to speak.
3. Elban Bey Easel, U.S. citizen, born 1910, imprisoned in Sagan 3.
4. P. J. Martinson, U.S. citizen, born 1912, imprisoned in Lamsdorf.
5. Private Richard Hansen, U.S. citizen, born 1904, imprisoned in Lublin.

In response to U.S. inquiries in 1945 concerning the whereabouts of Cook, however, the Soviet forces replied they had no information. According to Russian researchers who located these files, Soviet forces were instructed by Soviet authorities to deny any knowledge of these Americans on the grounds that they were in the hands of the Polish government. In reality, however, the Soviet Commissioner for the Repatriation Administration had information concerning Cook and the other liberated American POWs and refused to pass it to the American authorities who made inquiries.<sup>40</sup>

### **Allied POWs Held in NKVD Camps on Soviet Territory**

Archives in the Soviet Union have shed light on the fate of prisoners from various nations—including the United States—who were held in NKVD and KGB prison camps and special hospitals after World War II and in the 1950s. Some of these individuals had been liberated from German POW camps, others captured by Soviet forces. French, Japanese, Austrian, Polish, and German researchers have looked into these materials to determine the fate of nationals from these countries. The motivation for the Soviet policy for retaining Allied POWs, however, has not been fully explained from primary source materials. The experience of French nationals who were captured and imprisoned by Soviet forces sheds important light on Soviet

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<sup>40</sup>To find information about these individuals today, it will be necessary to review the records of the Krakow Commandant's Office, the mental hospital where the men were held, and the special hospital in Krakow.



motives as well as adding to the body of evidence that shows American servicemen—liberated from German POW camps and captured by Soviet forces—were held in Soviet NKVD camps in Soviet territory.

The French case, which has been the subject of two books by Pierre Rigoulot, is particularly interesting and informative, since it concerns a large number of surviving French POWs who had direct contact with American citizens and POWs in Soviet prisons such as Tambov.<sup>41</sup>

### The French Experience

In August 1942, the Nazi *gauleiter* in Alsace and Moselle, regions that Germany had annexed in the summer of 1940, pressed 130,000 young men into the Wehrmacht. Almost all of these men were sent to the Russian front where many were either captured or deserted to the Soviet side. The Soviet forces did not treat the French as friends or allies. The Soviets stripped the French of their possessions and transported thousands of them to Tambov, a camp 450 miles southeast of Moscow also known as Camp 188 or the "French Camp."<sup>42</sup> Not all French citizens suffered this cruel fate. The Soviet forces repatriated 27,503 liberated French POWs through Odessa.<sup>43</sup>

The story of the imprisonment and mistreatment of thousands of French citizens is well documented in Soviet archive material.<sup>44</sup> At Tambov, behind barbed wire in conditions as miserable as anything found at Buchenwald or Dachau, the Frenchmen were compelled to perform forced labor and subjected to political indoctrination. Over 10,000 prisoners died of starvation, neglect, and disease in this wretched camp, which is shown in Figure 1.1. Most of the survivors were not repatriated until the autumn of 1945 or later.

<sup>41</sup> *La tragédie des Malgré-nous—Tambov, le camp des Français* (Paris: Editions Denoël, 1990) and *Des Français au goulag 1917–1984* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1984).

<sup>42</sup> *La tragédie des Malgré-nous—Tambov, le camp des Français*.

<sup>43</sup> RAMP's, p. 33.

<sup>44</sup> "Special Archives Shed Light on French POWs," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, Soviet Union, May 4, 1990, pp. 43–44.

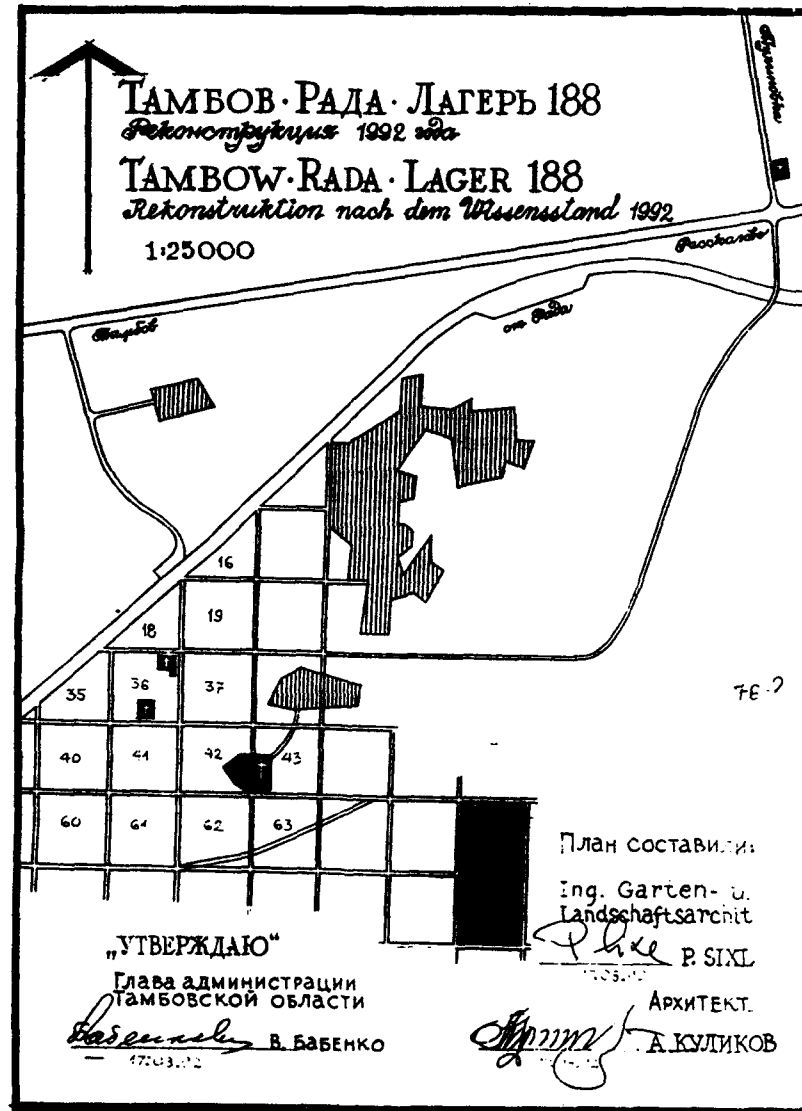


Figure 1.1—Schematic of Rada Camp 188, Tambov USSR

In 1944, according to Rigoulot's research, a group of French prisoners was allowed to return home. Soviet intelligence organs attempted to recruit agents among the French POWs who were released. Rigoulot also determined that many of the repatriated French prisoners were contacted by Soviet intelligence as long as ten years after their release from Tambov. One hypothesis to explain Soviet behavior is that the NKVD's recruitment efforts among the group of French prisoners released in 1944 was so dismal, no other prisoners were permitted out until after the end of the war.

### **American POWs in the USSR**

Archival material from Soviet sources clearly shows that dozens of American POWs were confined in USSR territory during and after World War II. The USSR People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, in a summary dated November 10, 1944, noted that 23 American citizens, apparently all U.S. servicemen from World War II, were being held in the following detention facilities:

Krasnogorsky Camp No. 27-1; Styretsky Camp No. 62-1; Morshansky Camp No. 64-1; Asbestovskiy Camp No. 84-1; Georgievskiy Camp No. 147-1; Voroshilovgradskiy Camp No. 144-1; Cherepovetsky Camp No. 158-1; Radinsky Camp No. 188-4; Vladimirsky Camp No. 190-1; Donbassky Camp No. 280-1; Minsky Camp No. 168-1; Bobruiskiy Camp No. 56; Sredne-Volzhskiy Camp No. 215-1; Lisichanskyk Camp No. 125-1; Gorlovskiy Camp No. 242-3; Sestroretsky Camp No. 211-1; 'Kaunas' Front Camp No. 24-2.<sup>45</sup>

As of December 20, 1945, a document entitled *Information on the POWs Belonging by Their Nationality to the States That Were Not At War with the USSR Who Are Confined in the NKVD Camps*, indicates that among all POWs held by the Soviet Union, 13 were American (including two officers) and were held in the following camps:

Novozybkovskiy Camp No. 327; Leningradskiy Camp No. 339; Mtsensky Camp No. 466; Degtyarsky Camp No. 313; Smolensky

<sup>45</sup>The Center for Historical Documentary Collections, Moscow, Fond 1, Inventory 10E, File 8, p. 210.

Camp No. 218; Yaroslavsky Camp No. 282; Krymsky Camp No. 241; Dnepropetrovsky Camp No. 315; Melitpolsky Camp No. 419; Odessky Camp No. 159; Polotsky Camp No. 243; Valginsky Camp No. 287; Rakversky Camp No. 292.<sup>46</sup>

Other Soviet documents show that six months later "39 American POWs were received as of May 16, 1945" while 40 Americans were kept prisoner in the USSR as of June 26.<sup>47</sup> In March 1946, NKVD Colonel General S. K. Kruglov reported to V. M. Molotov and the Council of People's Commissars that as of February 20, 1946, there were eight American POWs in custody. The same figure is mentioned in *Reference Book of the National Composition of the Former German Army Prisoners of War Confined in Camps*. In May 1946, the Ministry for Internal Affairs, in its *Report on the Course of Preparation for the Release of the Prisoners of War and Interned Persons of Non-German Nationality*, six American POWs (including one officer) were not to be released because they had been captured while serving in SS units.

The Soviet version of events is blurred by the fact that NKVD registration records do not reflect POWs kept in labor camps run by the People's Commissariat for Defense. The People's Commissariat for Defense did not record by nationality the identity of the POWs. In addition, "American" was recognized as a citizenship rather than a nationality by Soviet authorities. Thus, Americans could be listed in Soviet registers by the nationality of their parents, for example.

#### **Americans Confined at Rada Camp 188, Tambov**

Soviet-era archival evidence shows that Americans were transported to Rada Camp 188, Tambov. Other direct evidence, such as eyewitness reports, also link American POWs who had been liberated from German camps to this NKVD camp. A Russian researcher who has done a great deal of work in Tambov addressed the issue of American prisoners in February 1992:

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<sup>46</sup>The Center for Historical Documentary Collections, Fond 1, Inventory 3A, File 2, p. 57.

<sup>47</sup>The Center for Historical Documentary Collections, Fond 1, File 37, p. 40.

It is difficult to imagine that American POWs were kept in Soviet prison camps . . . . However, this was suggested as early as the mid-1980s by Mr. Jean Touet (phonetic spelling), the chairman of the French Association, "Survivors of Tambov." Touet wanted to visit Rada camp near Tambov where a lot of Frenchmen were kept and died during World War II but was denied permission . . . . Today, times have changed and the camp's cemetery where individuals from 26 nations are buried can be visited by anyone.

In any event, there is some direct evidence about American POWs being kept in Camp 188. Maria Il'inichna Filippova worked in this camp's registration office. She told me that she encountered American and British names while going through the questionnaire that each prisoner had to fill out. This information about Americans being kept in Rada camp is confirmed by Aleksei Nikolaevich Lobanov, a resident of Tambov, who served 1943-46 as an NKVD officer [operupolnomochennyi] in this camp. Though he can't recall names or other details, he remembers that there were usually a relatively small number of Americans there, between six and ten. These testimonies are supported by documents found in the Tambov archives.

The fate of American prisoners was probably in many ways similar to the one of the Frenchmen who also were kept in Rada. First, the Soviet side denied their existence, then they said that there are about 1,500 Frenchmen buried in Rada and other abandoned cemeteries. The French government insists the number was more like 15,000 and has supplied evidence . . . .

It is very difficult today to determine the exact number of prisoners who died in the camp; there were dozens, hundreds of them. It is enough to look at article number six of the document entitled, *The Results of the Selective Inspection of Camp No. 188*. This document is kept in the Tambov Oblast Archives.

During the inspection of the grave for 250 bodies it was found that in the trench, which was 2.5 meters deep, bodies were heaped up on top of one another one meter above the surface level. The graves are not covered with lime.

There is another document which authorized falsified reports about the death of prisoners.

To: Chief of NKVD Camp No. 188, Senior Lt. of State Security Comrade Yevdokimov

In your wire reports about prisoner movements the word 'died' from now on should be substituted with the word 'loaded.'

Chief of the NKVD USSR Directorate for POWs and Internees, Major of State Security Sopronenkov.<sup>48</sup>

In addition to this research, other evidence supports the conclusion that American POWs were held in Tambov after World War II.

Soviet documents show that NKVD troops were instructed, by order of an NKVD directive dated April 28, 1945, to confine American citizens in Camp 188 at Tambov less than one week after the signing of the Standfast agreement. On May 11, 1945, Major Yusichev, the Chief Administrator of Camp 188, was ordered to prepare the camp for "2,500 French, Alsatian, Luxembourgish, American, and British POWs who will arrive shortly."<sup>49</sup>

Several eyewitness accounts link English-speaking prisoners to Tambov, though some doubt that these prisoners were Americans. A senior lieutenant working at Camp 64 in the town of Morshansk in the Tambov region recollected:

There were no Americans in the camp, at least when I worked there (end of 1945 to early 1946), but there were prisoners who spoke English. The fact is, Chiefs of units did not know nationalities or the quantity of prisoners. They were responsible only for their unit.

According to other Camp 188 workers, the number of Americans held at Tambov was small.

French and other prisoners have no doubt that American POWs were held at Tambov. In 1992, a group from Luxembourg visited Tambov. In this group there were seven former prisoners who had been held

<sup>48</sup>Letter to Yuri Pankov from Yevgenii Pisarev, February 1992.

<sup>49</sup>From Chief of the UNKVD T/O Colonel of State Security Lushuk and Chief of the OPVI UNKVDI/ Major of State Security Livshits (Top Secret), to Chief Administrator, Camp 188, Major of State Security Yusichev, Station Rada, May 11, 1945.

in Camp 188. They recalled that when they were moved from Camp 64 (Morshansk) to Camp 188 (station Rada) in the winter of 1946, they were met by a German-speaking American who was driving an open car. Roger Koehren, the chairman of the French group, Survivors of Tambov, recalled:

With me, in barrack [quarantine] number one, there were American and English aviators [pilotes d'aviation]. They had all been held in German Stalags or in eastern Germany and were, like the Alsacians, gathered at Tambov to be repatriated. I do not know what happened to these poor pilots. They were not repatriated with us at the end of 1945.

On August 15, 1945, the Soviet Committee for State Security decided to "liberate and repatriate all prisoners of war of all nationalities" who had been held in "NKVD camps and special hospitals."<sup>50</sup> This order, which did not apply to "persons who had served in the SS, SA, Gestapo, and other units of repression including officers," covered the following groups of people shown in Table 1.2.

**Table 1.2**  
**Soviet Committee for State Security:**  
**"Persons to Be Released" List**

Czechoslovakians	32,000
Yugoslavians	9,500
Belgians	1,000
Dutch	1,300
Luxembourgeois	720
Danes	230
Bulgarians	280
Norwegians	55
Swedes	31
Swiss	24
Greeks	20
Americans	40
British	15

<sup>50</sup>Memorandum to Comrade Kruglov, Central Archive, Moscow.

Decision number 1494-391 taken by the Soviet SNK<sup>51</sup> on June 26, 1946, directed that 15,139 French prisoners, all who were held—with no exceptions—should be released from camps and special hospitals and repatriated to France.<sup>52</sup> This was not the end to reports that American citizens captured during World War II were being held illegally in the Soviet Union.<sup>53</sup> U.S. government efforts to collect information indicating the presence of Americans in Soviet custody began in 1945. This information was used as a basis for U.S. inquiries and protests within the framework of the Leipzig, Yalta, and other agreements.

### The Russian Version of American Prisoners at Tambov

The Tass news agency reported on June 29, 1992, that "at least one U.S. POW was buried near the city of Tambov."<sup>54</sup> The grave was allegedly located near the village of Kirsanov where a World War II hospital was once located. General Volkogonov told the press that U.S. servicemen with "suspect" names—Russian, Jewish and Ukrainian—were "treated with great suspicion" by the Soviet secret police. Thus far, no archive material or evidence in the form of documents supports these assertions concerning Soviet policy. If this were Soviet policy, it remains to be explained why the first alleged American POW does not fit any of Volkogonov's hypotheses. The alleged POW identified by Volkogonov, Francesco Luigi Di Bartholomeo, was listed in the Tambov records as an Italian national. Di Bartholomeo, whose date of death at Tambov is recorded as April 2, 1945, is alleged to have been born in the United States in 1924. This individual has yet to be shown to be either an American citizen or a member of the U.S. armed forces.

Other explanations of what happened to American POWs do not hold up well under scrutiny. In December 1991, the Senate Select Com-

<sup>51</sup>Council of People's Commissars, later replaced by the State Defense Committee (GKO).

<sup>52</sup>Memorandum to Comrade Kruglov, Central Archive, Moscow.

<sup>53</sup>"Further on U.S. WWII MIAs in USSR," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, Soviet Union, September 27, 1991, pp. 19-20.

<sup>54</sup>"Four GIs Listed in Soviet Hands, Russian Says," *Washington Post*, June 29, 1992.



mittee on POW/MIA Affairs visited Moscow. During this visit, General Dimitrii Volkogonov gave the U.S. delegation a list, shown in Table 1.3, which is alleged to contain the names of 14 American POWs who died in Soviet custody during World War II. There is no information concerning the sources used to compile this list. The list does not correspond to unaccounted-for POW records of the Adjutant General, for example, in Appendix 20.

**Table 1.3**  
**Volkogonov's List of Deceased Americans: December 1991**

Last, First Name	Birth	Place of Birth	Death	Camp Number and Location
1. Boos, Ian	1914	Lancaster, USA	12Jan45	5929 Voroshilov-grad oblast
2. Wilkins, Wilhelm J.	1913	Not indicated	12Feb45	3943 (No location)
3. Gaib, Arnold August	1902	Not indicated	26Apr44	62 Kiev oblast
4. Zenf, Ronald	1922	Elbing, Germany	25Jan45	165 Ivanovo oblast
5. Conrad, George	1925	Not indicated	06Jul45	5951 Tambov oblast
6. Nidel, Franz	1906	Not indicated	16Mar44	22 1st Ukrainian front
7. Rander, Heinrich H.	1916	Not indicated	12Jan45	5929 Voroshilov-grad oblast
8. Rapp, Herbert R.	1890	Fali, USA	14Jul45	102 Cheliabinsk oblast
9. Sakal, Yvgeni Iosif	1905	San Francisco, USA	26Jun43	3888 Udmurta ASSR
10. Faconi, Benedetto Pietro	1914	Not indicated	25Feb43	Not indicated
11. Frech, Erhard Mikhail	1909	Richmond, IN, USA	05May45	38 Ismail Oblast
12. Sheck, Carl Andreas	1924	Milvani, USA	25Feb45	1149 Zaporozhye oblast
13. Schlag, Herman H.	1923	Los Angeles, USA	26Apr45	1035 Kiev oblast
14. Schlaude, Alois (Gemes, Edmond)	1920	Bremen, Germany	22Jul44	242 Donbass

### **Allegations That 23,000 U.S. POWs Were Moved to USSR**

Charges have been made in Senate Select Committee hearings<sup>55</sup> and elsewhere<sup>56</sup> that more than 23,000 American POWs liberated from Nazi German POW camps by Soviet forces were transported to USSR territory and never repatriated. These accusations are without merit. Since they have received so much publicity, however, it is necessary to review them here.

U.S. data show that by May 23, "23,421 liberated American prisoners were recovered from Soviet custody; and 5,241 were recovered by May 28. This made a total of 28,662 and presumably included those who were recovered through Odessa."<sup>57</sup> The names and service numbers of these repatriated POWs can be retrieved from U.S. military personnel records.

Soviet data indicate that 22,554 Americans were liberated and repatriated by Soviet forces.<sup>58</sup> There are partial passenger manifests in the Soviet files that indicate where the 22,554 were liberated and where they were sent for repatriation. No list by name of liberated American POWs has been found in Soviet archives though camp manifests and registration cards were at one time in the custody of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the USSR and the NKVD. There is no evidence from Soviet records to support the allegation that over 20,000 U.S. POWs liberated from Nazi camps were transferred to Soviet territory.

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<sup>55</sup>James D. Sanders asserts that U.S. forces failed to recover "2,500 [U.S. POWs] out of Poland and the Ukraine between February and March 1945, and 21,000 along the western front during May 1945, for a total of 23,500" U.S. POWs liberated by Soviet forces allegedly were subsequently retained "as hostages for political purposes" by "the Bolsheviks." *POW/MIA*s, pp. 420-421.

<sup>56</sup>Mark Sauter, *Soldiers of Misfortune* (Washington, D.C.: National Press Books, 1992), Chapter 8, "Historical Myth," pp. 95-102.

<sup>57</sup>*RAMP's*, p. 64.

<sup>58</sup>From Colonel General Golikov, Commissioner of the USSR Council of Ministers for Repatriation Affairs, to The Chief of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces Marshal of the Soviet Union Comrade Vasilevsky, Communiqué No. 54, December 2, 1946.

On May 19, 1945, a U.S. cable noted erroneously "that 25,000 still remained in Soviet custody."<sup>59</sup> The picture was clouded even more by a May 29, 1945, cable from the London War Office to the British Embassy Washington that contained the sentence, "There are still a number of British and American PW in Soviet hands including 15,597 Americans and 8,462 British released by Marshal Tolbukhin."<sup>60</sup> Conspiracy theorists hang their entire story of the transfer of 23,000 U.S. POWs on a tortured interpretation of these cables, all of which were clarified shortly after they were written.

After the information in this telegram was shared by the British Embassy with the "appropriate American authorities... [who] expressed incredulity at the statement... that 15,597 American and 8,462 British PW's released by Marshal Tolbukhin were still in Soviet hands," the embassy notified the War Office that the U.S. War Department reported "the figures quoted by you refer to Russian Nationals held by U.S. and British Forces in Italy and not to American and British liberated PW's in Russian hands."<sup>61</sup> The War Office inquired at Air Force Headquarters (A.F.H.Q.), "Do the figures 15,597 USA accounts and 8,462 British accounts refer to numbers of American and British PW in Soviet hands or Soviet nationals held by US and British forces in Italy awaiting repatriation?"<sup>62</sup> A.F.H.Q. replied on June 3, "Figures did refer to Soviet citizens then held by US and British... No known estimate of British Commonwealth PW still in Tolbukhin Zone."<sup>63</sup>

For it to be true that about 23,000 American POWs were liberated from Nazi German camps, transferred to USSR territory and never repatriated, all of the following must also be true:

<sup>59</sup>RAMP's, p. 64, citing Cable S-88613, 19 May 1945, SHAEF Main adg Eisenhower to AGWAR.

<sup>60</sup>From A.M.S.S.O. (Top Secret Cipher Telegram), to J.S.M., Washington, May 29, 1945. This was apparently taken from the British Public Record Office, record group W032.13749.

<sup>61</sup>From J.S.M., Washington (Top Secret Cipher Telegram), to A.M.S.S.O., May 31, 1945.

<sup>62</sup>From The War Office (Immediate Secret Cipher Telegram), to A.F.H.Q and B.A.S., Washington, Despatch 020600, June 1945.

<sup>63</sup>From A.F.H.Q. (Important Secret Cipher Telegram), to The War Office and for info to BAS Washington, June 3, 1945.

- That the entire U.S. historical record, including the *RAMP's* report, has been falsified and every one of the thousands of military and government officials who produced it have participated in a cover-up that has lasted nearly fifty years.
- That Supreme Allied Headquarters deliberately distorted estimates of Americans in Nazi camps following the first day of the Normandy invasion to arrive at a final March 1945 estimate. This would also mean that Allied Headquarters deliberately underestimated the total American POW population by more than 30 percent (the estimate of 76,000 did not factor in 14,000 unanticipated recoveries + 23,000 POWs whose existence had to be concealed so they could be left in Soviet custody). The falsified estimate would have had to conceal the existence of 37,000 American POWs. This would mean that the plan to abandon a precise number of POWs was conceived and implemented in early 1944.
- That the Soviets had at one time in their custody approximately 56,500 American POWs, 23,000 of whom were not estimated as POWs by Allied Headquarters, were not carried as POWs in German records, and all of whom were successfully transported to and imprisoned in the USSR without a trace. This would mean that the Soviets underreported by 40 percent their own internal repatriated American POW data.
- That the Soviets had a motive for neglecting to take credit for circa 6,000 Americans who were counted by Allied Headquarters as having been liberated by the Soviets. This would also mean that Allied Headquarters had a motive for giving credit to the Soviets for returning circa 6,000 more men than they claimed while simultaneously concealing the alleged fact that 23,000 had been withheld.
- That identical discrepancies in American POW data were somehow simultaneously "inserted" in Soviet, German, and British data. This would mean that all of the Allies, the Germans, the Soviets, and fellow prisoners concealed the existence of 23,000 POWs (24 percent of the entire American POW population in Germany) during and after the war.
- That the reporting of the post-war U.S. Army "Psypool" program, designed to collect information on Americans in Soviet custody in the 1950s, was tampered with. This would mean that over a period of decades, either the U.S. government screened and suppressed

live sightings of 23,000 "abandoned" POWs or not a single live sighting was received.

- That the families of the 23,000 "abandoned" POWs either participated in the cover-up or that the inquiries from some or all of the 23,000-plus family members have been suppressed. This would mean that the letters from POWs who wrote home to their families from German camps and the records of those who received Red Cross parcels records have been forged, concealed, or destroyed with no trace even from the families involved.
- That the loss of 25 percent of the U.S. POW population was concealed for one half a century and could only be "proven" by conspiracy mongers whose conclusions are based on a highly contentious exegesis and interpretation of a narrow range of historical documents.

The evidence does not support any of these assertions. The assertion that thousands or even several hundred American POWs were liberated from Nazi German POW camps by the Soviets then transferred to USSR territory is fabricated and without serious merit. The only way this conclusion has been reached is by manipulating and distorting data.

There is no direct evidence from U.S. sources that supports the conclusion that over 23,000 American POWs were transferred to USSR territory and imprisoned in NKVD camps. There has been no direct evidence produced from Soviet-era archives that supports the assertion that hundreds or thousands of liberated American POWs were transported to the territory of the USSR.

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## EARLY COLD WAR AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter has three purposes: (1) to estimate the number of early Cold War (1945–1969) aircraft incidents involving Soviet bloc attacks on U.S. aircraft; (2) to examine claims that crew members from any U.S. aircraft shot down by Soviet forces were captured and held against their will in USSR territory; and (3) to present U.S. government inquiries and protests that illustrate the U.S. government's policy to obtain information concerning and the release of anyone whose American citizenship could be established with confidence.

### NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

Throughout the Cold War, the United States conducted peripheral surveillance of the Soviet Union using a variety of aircraft and intelligence collection techniques.<sup>1</sup> The United States was involved in over 100 aircraft incidents, defined as events when Soviet bloc anti-aircraft forces showed hostile intent or actually attacked U.S. aircraft, with the Soviet Union and its allies in the early Cold War years. Many of these incidents, including shoot-downs, were publicized when they occurred.<sup>2</sup> Most of them did not result in shoot-downs or loss of life.

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<sup>1</sup>This activity has been documented in a number of open source studies, viz., James Bamford, *The Puzzle Palace: A Report on America's Most Secret Agency* (New York: Viking Press, 1983); Dick van der Aart, *Aerial Espionage: Secret Intelligence Flights by East and West* (New York: ARCO/Prentice Hall Press, 1985); and *We See All: A History of the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1947–1967* (55th ELINT Association Historian, 1982).

<sup>2</sup>"List of Previous Attacks," *New York Times*, March 13, 1953. See also memo to OSD/ISA/EAPR (POW/MIA) Commander John R. Kinczel, from Colonel George A. Ward, Jr.,

The consequence of U.S. policy was to bring American aircraft into the range of Soviet air defenses on a routine basis. The routine nature of these missions changed dramatically on April 8, 1950, when the Soviet Union shot down a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft in the Baltic.

Information on the magnitude and nature of these incidents from contemporary Russian sources is not always what it seems at first to be. President Yeltsin reported to the U.S. Senate in a June 1992 letter,

during the 1950s nine U.S. aircraft were shot down over the territory of the USSR. The records show that as of August 1, 1953, eight American citizens were held in Soviet prisons and prison camps and four others were held in special psychiatric hospitals.<sup>3</sup>

These two statements by President Yeltsin were neither precise nor consistent with data in the hands of the U.S. government at the time the statement was made. Source material provided by General Volkogonov to the U.S.-Russian Commission does not link "eight American citizens" to any U.S. aircraft.

Yeltsin's letter specifically states that nine aircraft were shot down over Soviet territory, but the letter does not indicate what is meant by "over the territory of the USSR." This is an important point because the United States and the Soviet Union disagreed as to the limits of the USSR's territorial waters, over which many attacks on U.S. aircraft occurred.

Stories circulated in the 1990s that "as many as a dozen Americans," perhaps crew members from downed U.S. aircraft, were held against their will in the Soviet GULAG in the 1950s.<sup>4</sup> One journalist reported 50 crewmen who had not been accounted for from these incidents, another put the total at 42.<sup>5</sup> Official sources have presented precise

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Chief, Casualty Matters, Department of the Air Force, Headquarters Air Force Military Personnel Center, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, "Request for Details of Service Cold War Era POW/MIA Cases," October 28, 1991.

<sup>3</sup>Yeltsin letter to the U.S. Senate, undated (June 1992 Summit).

<sup>4</sup>Doyle McManus, "Ghosts in the Gulag," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1991.

<sup>5</sup>Spencer Rich, "50 U.S. Airmen Downed by Soviets Never Were Traced," *Washington Post*, June 14, 1992.

(but confusing) data as well. Ambassador Malcomb Toon announced in September 1992 that "there had been 60 cases of American planes shot down over Soviet territory during the Cold War." A member of the U.S. delegation to the U.S.-Russian Commission added, "these shootdowns involved 135 people."<sup>6</sup> Announcements such as Toon's have not been supported by primary source documentation.

According to a variety of official U.S. estimates and data from a number of sources, 40 U.S. military aircraft were shot down by Soviet or Soviet bloc anti-aircraft fire in the early Cold War years between 1945-1977. Information from a variety of sources is used here to elaborate on the context in which attacks on U.S. aircraft occurred. A 1955 RAND study of aircraft incidents was based on primary source data.

Important sources of information in this report that shed light on various aspects of these operations included the USAF classified operational files of the Reconnaissance Branch, Operations and Commitments Division, Directorate of Operations, DCS/O. Additional material on some points was obtained from Collection Operations Division, Directorate of Intelligence, DCS/O. The United States Department of State was extremely helpful in making available from its classified files materials that were useful for this study.<sup>7</sup>

Dates for aircraft incidents are taken from this declassified study as well as a variety of service statements, DoD summaries, newspaper accounts, and analytical reports.<sup>8</sup>

The fates of the crewmembers of these aircraft are shown in Table 2.1:

<sup>6</sup>Celestine Bohlen, "Advice of Stalin: Hold Korean War P.O.W.'s," *New York Times*, September 25, 1992.

<sup>7</sup>A. L. George, *Case Studies of Actual and Alleged Overflights, 1930-1953* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, August 15, 1955) (Secret), RM-1349, and the (Top Secret) *Supplement* to RM-1349. Both were declassified in August 1992 at the request of the author of this study.

<sup>8</sup>"Secrets of the Cold War," *U.S. News and World Report*, March 15, 1993.



**Table 2.1**  
**Overview of Cold War Shoot-Downs of U.S. Aircraft**

Total U.S. aircraft shot down	40
Total crew members on board	364
Crew members recovered alive	187
Crew members recovered deceased	34
Crew members carried as "fate unknown"	135
Crew members deceased, not recovered	8

SOURCE: Department of Defense.

The U.S. government suspected that crewmembers who survived were captured alive by Soviet forces. The records shows that on at least three occasions (June 1958, May 1960, July 1960), American aviators were returned to U.S. military control after they had been shot down and captured by Soviet forces. Others were returned from captivity in Soviet bloc countries. As will be shown, the U.S. government concluded that others had been captured alive but not released by Soviet forces. Protests to the Soviet government were made to this effect.

A chronological listing of incidents selected because of their serious nature or political importance, including all cases of shoot-downs found in the course of research for this study, is contained in Table 2.2. The total number of aircraft incidents of all types exceeds 150.

### CONTEXT OF SHOOT-DOWNS

The quantity and quality of information concerning U.S. aircraft shot down by Soviet bloc forces varies greatly. The purpose of this section is to describe the varying circumstances for incidents that have been documented in some degree of detail.

#### April 8, 1950

On April 8, 1950, a U.S. Navy PB4Y-2 Privateer was shot down by Soviet fighters during what was probably an electronic warfare research mission.<sup>9</sup> The attack took place 35 miles west-southwest of

<sup>9</sup> *Aerial Espionage*, p. 58.

**Table 2.2**  
**Early Cold War Aircraft Incidents, 1945-1977**  
 (Forty aircraft that were shot down are in **boldface**.)

- 
- 1945
1. Soviet violations of SCAP Air Regulations over Occupied Japan (1945-1947)
  2. U.S. Navy plane fired on by Soviet plane off Port Arthur (October 15, 1945)
- 1946
3. Soviet fighter planes fire warning bursts at U.S. Navy plane off Dairen (February 20, 1946)
  4. Soviet harassment of U.S. flights in Vienna air corridor (1946)
  5. Two U.S. military planes fired upon by Soviet fighter planes over Austria (April 22, 1946)
  6. U.S. C-47 shot down over Yugoslavia (August 9, 1946)
  7. U.S. C-47 shot down over Yugoslavia (August 19, 1946)
  8. British RAF plane forced to land by Yugoslav military plane (October 5, 1946)
  9. U.S. plane in emergency landing in Hungary (December 1, 1946)
- 1948-1949
10. Air collision of British and Soviet planes over Gatow airfield, Berlin (April 5, 1948)
  11. Berlin airlift (1948-1949)
  12. U.S. overflight of Amstettin in Soviet Zone of Austria (November, 1948)
  13. Soviet protests against U.S. air surveillance of Soviet shipping in Sea of Japan and Far East waters (1948-1949)
  14. Soviet interception of U.S. Navy reconnaissance aircraft over the Baltic Sea (October 5, 1949)
- 1950
15. Soviet nonhostile interception of U.S. reconnaissance aircraft (B-17) in north Baltic (March 6, 1950)
  16. Soviet interception of U.S. reconnaissance aircraft (B-29) near Dairen (March 22, 1950)
  17. Soviet fighters shoot down U.S. Navy PB4Y-2 over the Baltic, April 8, 1950

**Table 2.2 (continued)**

- 
18. Czech protest against U.S. air violations (July 1950)
  19. Soviet interception of U.S. reconnaissance plane (B-29) off the east Siberian coast (July 18, 1950)
  20. Alleged U.S. overflights of Communist China before Chinese intervention in Korean War (August to November 1950)
  21. U.S. attack on Soviet airfield in Siberia (October 8, 1950)

1951

22. Czech protest of alleged U.S. air violations (Mid-January to June 1951)
23. U.S. admission of air violation of Czechoslovakia (February 7, 1951)
24. Czech detention of two U.S. fighter pilots (June 8, 1951)
25. Swedish overflights of Soviet territory (July 17 and 26, 1951)
26. U.S. Navy plane shot down by Soviet fighters off Vladivostok (November 6, 1951)
27. C-47 shot down over Hungary (November 18, 1951)

1952

28. U.S. Navy reconnaissance aircraft fired on by Soviet missiles in the Baltic (January 23-24, 1952)
29. Soviet ground-to-air rocket fire on U.S. reconnaissance plane (RB-50) off Dairen (March 29, 1952)
30. U.S. Navy patrol bomber fired on over China Sea (April 1, 1952)
31. Soviet fighters buzz plane carrying U.S. High Commissioner to Austria (June 4, 1952)
32. Soviets shoot down a USAF RB-29 over the Sea of Japan (June 13, 1952)
33. Soviets shoot down two Swedish aircraft over the Baltic (June 13 and 16, 1952)
34. MiGs attack U.S. reconnaissance plane off Dairen (July 16, 1952)
35. MiGs attack U.S. Navy plane east of Port Arthur (July 31, 1952)
36. Reported disappearance of U.S. observation plane in Northwest Pacific (August, 1952)
37. MiGs attack U.S. Navy patrol plane (September 20, 1952)

**Table 2.2 (continued)**

- 
- 38. **Soviet fighters shoot down USAF B-29 in the vicinity of Hokkaido, Japan (October 7, 1952)**
  - 39. U.S. unmarked hospital plane fired on by Soviet fighters in Berlin corridor (October 8, 1952)
  - 40. U.S. Navy jets and MiGs (probably Soviet) dogfight over Sea of Japan (November 18, 1952)
  - 41. U.S. C-54 fired on over South China Sea (November 24, 1952)
- 1953
- 42. **Soviet fighters shoot down USAF B-29 over North Korea (January 12, 1953)**
  - 43. U.S. Navy PV-2 shot down near Formosa (January 18, 1953)
  - 44. U.S. F-84 shot down by Czech MiG (March 10, 1953)
  - 45. British Lincoln bomber shot down and two other planes buzzed by Soviet MiGs over Germany (March 12, 1953)
  - 46. U.S. RB-50 fired on by Soviet MiGs off Kamchatka (March 15, 1953)
  - 47. Soviet Il-12 shot down by U.S. fighters over North Korea (July 27, 1953)
  - 48. U.S. RB-50 shot down by Soviet fighters off Cape Povorotny near Vladivostok (July 29, 1953)
  - 49. U.S. T-6 shot down over Korean DMZ (August 17, 1953)
- 1954
- 50. **B-29 shot down over the Sea of Japan (November 7, 1954)**
  - 51. U.S. P2V shot down over the Sea of Japan (September 4, 1954)
- 1955
- 52. **Unknown U.S. aircraft shot down over Korean DMZ (January 19, 1955)**
  - 53. U.S. RB-47 shot down over northern Pacific near Kamchatka (April 17, 1955)
  - 54. U.S. P2V shot down near Bering Straits (June 22, 1955)
  - 55. U.S. LT-6 shot down over Korean DMZ (August 17, 1955)
- 1956
- 56. **U.S. P4M shot down north of Formosa near Wenchow, China (August 22, 1956)**

**Table 2.2 (continued)**

- 
57. USAF RB-50 shot down about 200 miles west of Niigata, Honshu, Japan (September 10, 1956)

1957

58. U.S. T-33 shot down over Czechoslovakia/Albania (December 23, 1957)

1958

59. U.S. F-86 shot down over North Korea (March 6, 1958)

60. Soviets shoot down U.S. C-118 over Soviet Armenia (June 27, 1958)

61. Soviets shoot down USAF C-130 over Soviet Armenia (September 2, 1958)

1960

62. U.S. U2 shot down over Soviet Union (May 1, 1960)

63. U.S. C-47 shot down over East Germany (May 25, 1960)

64. USAF RB-47 shot down by Soviet fighters near Kola Peninsula (July 1, 1960)

1962

65. U.S. U2 shot down over Cuba (October 27, 1962)

1963

66. U.S. helicopter shot down over Korean DMZ (May 17, 1963)

67. U.S. light plane shot down over North Korea (August 6, 1963)

1964

68. U.S. T-39 shot down over East Germany (January 24, 1964)

69. U.S. T-39 shot down over East Germany (March 10, 1964)

1965

70. Unspecified U.S. aircraft shot down over PRC (September 17, 1965)

71. U.S. RB-57 shot down over Black Sea (December 14, 1965)

1967

72. Unspecified U.S. aircraft shot down (August 21, 1967)

Table 2.2 (continued)

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1968	
73.	U.S. DC-8 shot down near Kurile Islands (June 30, 1968)
1969	
74.	U.S. EC-121 shot down over Sea of Japan (April 15, 1969)
75.	U.S. OH-23 shot down over Korean DMZ (August 17, 1969)
1970	
76.	U.S. U-8 shot down over Soviet Armenia (October 21, 1970)
1977	
77.	U.S. CH-47 shot down over North Korea (July 14, 1977)

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Latvia.<sup>10</sup> All previous U.S. encounters with Soviet aircraft in this region had been nonhostile. The Soviet protest note of April 11, which the Soviets released to the public, asserted that a "B-29" had penetrated 13 miles (21 kilometers) into Soviet airspace near the naval base at Libau. The Soviets claimed that the "B-29," which was actually an unarmed version of the B-24, had opened fire on Soviet fighters.<sup>11</sup> The Privateer carried a crew of ten, all of whom were reported to have perished in the incident.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup>In June 1992, an exhibit at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. perpetuated the Soviet propaganda line that the Privateer was a B-29. The same exhibit ironically noted, "the opening of archives is a step forward in getting at the truth which can clear up the confusion and suspicion created in the past."

<sup>12</sup>*Aerial Espionage*, pp. 57-58. The names of the crew members are the following:

Fetts, John H.	Lt.	320676 USNR
Seeschaf, Howard W.	Lt.	264095 USN
Reynolds, Robert D.	Lt. jg	368573 USN
Burgess, Tommy L.	Ens.	506762 USN
Danens Jr., Joe H.	AD1	3685438 USN
Thomas, Jack W.	AD1	2242750 USN
Beckman, Frank L.	AT1	2799076 USN
Purcell, Edward J.	T3	2540438 USN
Rinnier Jr., Joseph Norris	AT3	2542600 USN
Bourassa, Joseph Jay	AL3	9539864 USN

### The Soviet attack on the Privateer and the Soviet diplomatic treatment of the incident

marked a major turning point in Soviet policy toward air encroachments around the Soviet perimeter. For the first time in the postwar period, the Soviets asserted the right to force foreign planes suspected of violating their territory to land upon Soviet territory, and, to shoot them down if they refused to land and attempted instead to return to international airspace.<sup>13</sup>

The Soviet attack was deliberate. "The best evidence of this comes from highly classified Swedish intelligence sources . . . . Swedish intelligence intercepted radio communications to Soviet fighter aircraft ordering them to pursue the plane and to shoot it down."<sup>14</sup> Shortly after the incident four Soviet flyers were decorated for their excellent performance of their official duty, leaving little doubt the attack was an expression of Soviet air defense and security policy. U.S. officials, inferring that the attack coincided with a new, aggressive Soviet air defense policy that had been introduced with no diplomatic adumbration, suspended reconnaissance operations in this area of the Baltic until January 1952. The Privateer shoot-down prompted the Joint Chiefs of Staff to order on May 19, 1950, among other things, that subsequent reconnaissance flights of this type would use armed SAC B-50s or B-29s.<sup>15</sup>

In 1992, the widow of Lt. jg Robert Reynolds came to Moscow to talk with the pilot who claims to have shot down the Privateer and to search for her husband. The pilot told her he believed the plane crashed with a loss of all hands. Igor Privalov told her, in contrast, that while he was a prisoner in the Soviet GULAG during the late 1970s he met another prisoner who recalled once having shared a cell with an American pilot named Reynolds.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, p. 11.

<sup>14</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, p. 12.

<sup>15</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup>Judi Buehrer, "Missing POW's Family Gains Hope in Russia," *Moscow Times*, September 15, 1992.

### November 6, 1951

A twin engine U.S. Navy Neptune bomber was shot down by Soviet fighters in the vicinity of Vladivostok on November 6, 1951. The incident and the Soviet protest of it were not disclosed until the U.S. Navy's announcement on November 23. The U.S. government attributed the late publicity to the fact that the Neptune, unlike the Privateer in 1950, was on a UN mission when it was shot down. There have been at least three different "official" U.S. descriptions of the Neptune's mission. The stereotyped Soviet version of events was interpreted as a sign that the shoot-down was a result of premeditated Soviet policy. The Kremlin did not play up this incident in its propaganda, again with the intent to remain aloof from any association with the Korean conflict. The United States dropped the case after concluding that the grounds on which a successful or effective protest could be made were too shaky.<sup>17</sup>

### June 13, 1952

On June 13, 1952, a USAF B-29 departed Yokota Air Base, Japan, "on a classified reconnaissance mission over the Sea of Japan."<sup>18</sup> Radar contact with the aircraft was lost approximately 100 miles north of Hokkaido 120 miles from the coastline of the Soviet Union. "The reasons for its loss are not known, but it is suspected that Soviet aircraft shot it down."<sup>19</sup> The missing aircraft was known to have three six-man and 11 one-man life rafts on board and sufficient food and medical supplies to care for all 12 crew members for three days. On June 14, 1952, during search and rescue operations, an empty six-man life raft, right side up, was spotted 100 miles from the Soviet coast. Search planes could not salvage the raft. An unconfirmed report indicated that a second six-man raft was seen four miles from the first, but this was not verified.

The search was continued until 17 June 1952, but no wreckage was found and no survivors were sighted. A message was received from

<sup>17</sup>RM-1349, p. 140.

<sup>18</sup>"Request for Details of Service Cold War Era POW/MIA Cases," Incident: June 13, 1952.

<sup>19</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, p. 46.



the Commander, Far East Air Forces, indicating that an official report from Radio Moscow on 16 June 1952 stated that one officer survivor was picked up by a Russian vessel about two days before. The name of the survivor was not given and efforts to confirm the report were unsuccessful. Later, the Commander of the Far East Air Forces reported that the cited broadcast did not pertain to this incident. The crew members were continued in a missing status until 14 November 1955 when their status was administratively changed by the Department of the Air Force to deceased by a presumptive finding of death. No subsequent information has ever been received on the fate of this crew.<sup>20</sup>

On June 18, 1952, the American Embassy at Moscow delivered Note No. 689 to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The Deputy Minister of State Security reported to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR:

Concerning the substance of the Note from the U.S. Embassy of June 18, 1952 (No. 689) we can state that on June 13th of this year at 1735 a U.S. B-29 plane was shot down by a MiG-15 airplane of the Airforce of the Soviet Army over our territorial waters in the Sea of Japan.

The location of the wreckage of the unidentified airplane indicated in the Note from the U.S. Embassy (41 degrees 39 minutes North latitude and 133 degrees 55 minutes East longitude) is 80 miles south of Valentine Bay (105 miles to the east of Vladivostok).

<sup>20</sup>The crew members lost in the B-29 incident of June 13, 1952, were:

Major Samuel N. Busch	A0733811
Captain James A. Sculley	A0693414
Captain Samuel D. Service	A0752509
First Lieutenant Robert J. McDonnell	A0222264
Master Sergeant William R. Homer	AF7025704
Master Sergeant David L. Moore	AF15229915
Staff Sergeant William A. Blizzard	AF19244175
Staff Sergeant Miguel W. Montserrat	AF13164064
Staff Sergeant Leon F. Bonura	AF18359162
Staff Sergeant Roscoe G. Becker	AF19391813
Staff Sergeant Eddie R. Berg	AF17281746
Airman First Class Danny H. Pillsbury	AF18245964

No wreckage of the shot-down airplane, weapons, or members of the crew were found by border patrol boats or duty border patrol teams.<sup>21</sup>

### July 31, 1952

A U.S. Navy P5-M was attacked by two MiGs 60 miles east of Port Arthur on July 31, 1952. The "U.S. plane suffered substantial damage and was forced to land at Paengyong-do. Two crew members were killed and two injured."<sup>22</sup> The attack was made by the Chinese, who described the Navy plane as a "legal target," since it was supporting UN combat operations in Korea. There were no diplomatic protests from either side over this incident.

### October 7, 1952

On October 7, 1952, a U.S. RB-29<sup>23</sup> was shot down by Soviet fighter aircraft in the vicinity of Hokkaido, Japan. This was the first hostile encounter between U.S. and Soviet aircraft in this area. According to the U.S. Air Force, "the Soviets admitted firing on the B-29 but denied any knowledge of the fate or whereabouts of the eight crew members."<sup>24</sup> The United States sent a protest note to the Soviet government on September 25, 1954, asking for \$1,620,295.01 in compensation. The U.S. government accused the Soviet government of capturing and retaining U.S. airmen from the downed RB-29. The U.S. government

concludes, and charges, that some or all of the crew of the B-29 successfully parachuted to the sea at approximately the position where the aircraft hit the water. . . . The United States government

<sup>21</sup>Memorandum from Deputy Minister of State Security N. Stakhanok to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR V. A. Zorin (undated). This document is included in material given to Secretary of State James Baker by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev in late 1991. These documents are referenced in this report as "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>22</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, p. 49.

<sup>23</sup>B-29s converted for reconnaissance operations were designated RB-29s.

<sup>24</sup>"Request for Details of Service Cold War Era POW/MIA Cases," Fact Sheet, Incident: 7 October 1952.

concludes, and charges, that the Soviet Government's patrol boat did pick up items of interest to the Soviet Government as well as survivors still alive and bodies of other crew members, if dead.<sup>25</sup>

The crew members were carried by the USAF as missing until November 15, 1955, when their status was terminated by a presumptive finding of death.<sup>26</sup> A staff member of the National Alliance of Families<sup>27</sup> asserted but offered no proof: "Air Force RV-29 brought down on October 7, 1952 over Yuriy Island, 8 crew members missing (Soviet soldiers rescued some survivors)."<sup>28</sup> In November 1992, the family of one crew member, John R. Dunham, received word from the Pentagon on November 6, 1992, that "Dunham, a navigator, was killed when his airplane was shot down over the Sea of Japan and crashed in waters claimed by the Soviet Union."<sup>29</sup> The Pentagon was

<sup>25</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, pp. 57-58. This is a direct quote attributed to *Department of State Bulletin*, October 18, 1954. Additional source material in this section of RM-1349 includes: Cable from FEAF (Secret) to USAF (AX 1590C CG), October 8, 1952; Letter from FEAF (Top Secret) to USAF, November 5, 1952; U.S. Government note to the USSR, September 25, 1954; and U.S. Government protest note to the USSR, October 17, 1954.

<sup>26</sup>The crew members of the B-29 lost on October 7, 1952 were:

Captain Eugene M. English	A0768042
Captain John R. Dunham	20173A
First Lieutenant Paul E. Brock	A02221927
Staff Sergeant Samuel A. Colgan	AF31379760
Staff Sergeant John A. Hirsch	AF19329704
Airman First Class Thomas G. Shipp	AF18365941
Airman Second Class Fred G. Kendrick	AF14347294
Airman Second Class Frank E. Neail, III	AF13394257

<sup>27</sup>The National Alliance of Families' representative, Mark Sauter, was described in the Russian press as a "desperate representative" of the National Alliance of Families who went to Moscow in December 1991 trying to buy information about U.S. servicemen lost during World War II and the Korean War. (Yulia Goryacheva, "About POWs Again?" *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, December 25, 1991.) Staff members of the Tambov POW camp cemetery reported that shortly after Sauter offered large sums of money for information concerning American POWs, the Tambov graves were desecrated. They attribute Sauter's offer of reward money as the motive for the desecration.

<sup>28</sup>"National Alliance of Families," by Mark Sauter, List Four, delivered to the Department of State Office of Independent States and Commonwealth Affairs in early 1992. Sauter's assertion, "7 Oct. 1952 Air Force RB-29 Yuri Island, 8 MIA (Soviets imprisoned survivors)" is also listed under "Priority Airplane Incidents," fax to Paul M. Cole from Mark Sauter, December 4, 1991.

<sup>29</sup>Michael Ross, "Czech Defector's Tip Expands MIA Hunt to E. Europe," *Los Angeles Times*, November 10, 1992.

able to inform the family of this news based on documents obtained by the Joint U.S.-Russian Commission. Apparently the Soviets recovered Dunham's body in 1952.

### November 18, 1952

On November 18, 1952, three U.S. Navy Panther jets involved in an air and surface strike in the Chongjin area engaged in a dogfight with four MiGs. The Navy suspected the MiGs to be Soviet but did not make the claim public at the time. "The incident was reported back to Washington by General Mark Clark, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a cabled reply, agreed that no release should be made at that time of the suspected nationality of the MiGs or their points of take-off."<sup>30</sup>

### January 12, 1953

On January 12, 1953, a USAF B-29 took off from Yokota Air Base, Japan, to drop leaflets over North Korea.<sup>31</sup> A ground radar station reported that the B-29 was 15 miles south of the Yalu River, in close proximity to several unidentified aircraft, when the B-29 went down after transmitting a "May Day" distress call. Search and rescue operations were suspended on January 16, 1953, because it was not possible to locate the wreckage. The survivors of the incident were transferred to the territory of the People's Republic of China where they were held for over two years as political prisoners.<sup>32</sup> The nego-

<sup>30</sup>RM-1349, *Supplement*, p. 92.

<sup>31</sup>"Request for Details of Service Cold War Era MIA/POW Cases," Incident: January 12, 1953.

<sup>32</sup>The crew of the B-29 shot down on January 12, 1953 included:

Colonel John K. Arnold, Jr.	21212A	(repatriated)
Major William H. Baumer	A0733786	(repatriated)
Captain Elmer F. Llewellyn	A020723609	(repatriated)
Captain Eugene J. Vaadi	A0825008	(repatriated)
1st Lt John W. Buck	A0787245	(repatriated)
1st Lt Paul E. Van Voorhis	A02091867	
1st Lt Henry D. Weese	A02091871	
1st Lt Wallace L. Brown	A02221928	(repatriated)
Tech Sergeant Howard W. Brown	AF36809947	(repatriated)
Airman 1stC Alvin D. Hart, Jr.	AF16353684	
Airman 1stC Steve E. Kiba	AF15426310	(repatriated)
Airman 2ndC Harry M. Benjamin, Jr.	AF27345828	(repatriated)
Airman 2ndC Daniel C. Schmidt	AF19391475	(repatriated)
Airman 2ndC John W. Thompson, III	AF13361709	(repatriated)

tiations that resulted in the release of the Americans in the PRC are discussed in the section, "Americans Reported in the PRC."

### **March 10, 1953**

On March 10, 1953, two U.S. F-84 jets were attacked over German territory by unidentified MiGs. One F-84 was shot down, the other escaped. The Czech government claimed the U.S. aircraft had penetrated Czech airspace then ignored requests to land. The United States protested the attack in a note to the Czech government on March 18 and again on August 18, 1954, which included a claim against the Czech government.<sup>33</sup>

### **July 29, 1953**

On July 29, 1953, a USAF RB-50, on loan to FEAF from the 343rd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, left Yokota Air Base, Japan, for a routine navigational mission over the Sea of Japan.<sup>34</sup> It was shot down by Soviet fighters off Cape Povorotny over the Sea of Japan.

As usual in such incidents, the Soviet version of the facts of this case contradicted the U.S. version on the following crucial points: whether a violation of Soviet territory was made; whether some sort of warning was given by the Soviet intercepting aircraft; and which plane opened fire. In addition, the Soviet government denied having any knowledge of survivors from the destroyed RB-50, whereas the U.S. government (especially in its note of October 9, 1954) cited indications available to it that the Soviets were withholding information on this score.<sup>35</sup>

Since a survivor of this attack had been rescued, the U.S. government was in an unusually strong position to make detailed points in its case against the Soviet government's actions.

<sup>33</sup>RM-1349, pp. 242-260.

<sup>34</sup>"Request for Details of Service Cold War Era POW/MIA Cases," Fact Sheet: July 29, 1953 incident.

<sup>35</sup>RM-1349, p. 304.

U.S. records show that "approximately 40 miles east of the Siberian coast, the RB-50 was attacked from the rear, without warning, by a MIG-15 type aircraft." That afternoon

search efforts located four survivors and further sighted within a radius of a mile and a half what appeared to be aircraft wreckage and survivors in two groups. An A-3 life raft was dropped, but due to darkness and fog, survivors were not seen to board the craft. Observations were also made of twelve unidentified small surface craft, presumably Russian, nine of which appeared to be headed toward the wreckage. On 30 July 1953, a US naval vessel located the A-3 life raft and rescued its one occupant, Captain John E. Roche. No further lead as to the fate of the other crew members was ever received and the organized search was suspended on 31 July 1953.

The status of First Lieutenant James G. Keither, one of the two navigators, was changed to deceased based upon the debriefing of Captain Roche, the lone survivor, who stated that Lieutenant Keither died when his head struck window framework in the nose of the aircraft after it had been hit. The remains of Captain Stanley K. O'Kelley and Master Sergeant Francis L. Brown were recovered along the coast of Japan. The remaining members of this crew were continued in a missing status until 14 November 1955 when their status was administratively changed by the Department of the Air Force to deceased by a presumptive finding of death.

In subsequent US communications with the Soviet Government, the Soviets denied any knowledge of the shootdown or the fate of the crew.

On July 31, 1953, Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen handed an aide-mémoire to Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. "My government has instructed me," the note reads, "to express the most decisive protest concerning the fact that on July 29 a U.S. RB-50 military plane was shot down by a Soviet airplane while the U.S. plane was making an ordinary flight over the Sea of Japan in order to study navigation." The note continued in the following fashion:

The second pilot of the U.S. airplane, rescued by a U.S. vessel approximately 40 miles off the Soviet coast south of Cape Povorotny confirmed that his aircraft with a crew of 17 members had been attacked by one or more Soviet MiG-15 airplanes, which having

fired on his motors and having caused a fire there thus caused the U.S. plane to crash.

Further information was received to the effect that other members of the crew who survived were picked up by Soviet vessels in the vicinity of the crash site. My government has instructed me to request that Soviet authorities inform us without delay about the condition of those individuals and also about what measures are being taken for their repatriation in the immediate future.<sup>36</sup>

On August 4, Ambassador Bohlen delivered another note, this time a memorandum containing "U.S. Government information on individuals who survived the incident with the B-50 airplane."

- 1) The second pilot was saved by an American vessel 40 miles off the Soviet coast to the south of Cape Povorotny.
- 2) The first pilot ejected simultaneously with the second pilot and it is supposed that other crew members also ejected.
- 3) Airplanes which conducted search and rescue operations dropped a life raft to other survivors and the crew of these airplanes are more or less sure that at least four and possibly a larger number of survivors made it into the life raft.
- 4) Those same U.S. airplanes discovered approximately nine Soviet PT vessels, approximately in this region and at least six of those PT vessels headed for the site where the wreckage of this plane was later discovered. A Soviet trawler was also discovered approximately in the indicated region.

On the basis of the above mentioned observations and testimony of the rescued second pilot it is thought to be highly likely that other crew members survived and that they possibly were rescued by Soviet vessels. In view of this the U.S. government urgently requests the Soviet government to conduct a further investigation of the whereabouts of any possible survivors from the crew.<sup>37</sup>

The Chairman of the Soviet General Staff, Admiral B. Fokin, advised the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, A. Gromyko, on August 5 that

<sup>36</sup>"Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>37</sup>"Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

the U.S. allegation that Soviet PT vessels had picked up crew members of the downed RB-50 "does not correspond to the truth."

As has already been reported to the Commander in Chief of the Military Navy Forces Admiral N. G. Koznetsov on July 30 of this year two American minesweepers approached said Soviet fishing trawler about 4:00 am.

U.S. and Japanese officers located on a motor boat which had been lowered from one of the minesweepers attempted to get information from the trawler concerning the B-50 airplane and its crew; however, they were not able to get any information since the trawler had not seen any wreckage of the airplane whatsoever and had not picked up members of the crew.

Attempts by the Americans to negotiate with the trawler came to nothing whatsoever because the Americans did not have a Russian interpreter on board.

Besides that trawler there were no other Soviet vessels in the area being searched by the Americans for their plane's crew.<sup>38</sup>

Over one year later a draft resolution from the Central Committee of the CPSU responding to a U.S. government note of October 4, 1954, concerning the shoot-down of the RB-50 was submitted to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Gromyko. The draft notes that the United States had on October 4 once more raised this issue without anything "new of any substance concerning said incident as compared to previous U.S. notes." The U.S. note, in the Central Committee's view, contained the groundless supposition that "crew members of the U.S. airplane intruder were picked up by Soviet vessels and are being held by Soviet authorities." The draft summarizes the U.S. rejection of the USSR's claim to 12 miles of territorial water and reports that the U.S. note had been published by the Department of State and "sent around to members of the Security Council" at the U.N. The Central Committee recommended that the U.S. government be advised that the U.S. aircraft

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<sup>38</sup>Memorandum from Chairman of the General Staff Admiral B. Fokin to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Comrade A. A. Gromyko, August 8, 1953, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."



was the first to open fire on [the Soviet airplanes] in connection with which the Soviet interceptors defending the state border of the USSR were forced to open return fire. At the moment it opened fire on the Soviet fighters the intruding airplane was located at a point with the following coordinates: 42 degrees 38'3" latitude, 132 degrees 20'9" longitude, i.e., near the Soviet Askold Island, not far from Vladivostok and not 40 miles to the south of Cape Povorotny as is claimed in the U.S. Government's note.

The Soviet Government has already stated that Soviet authorities have no information whatsoever concerning the fate of the above mentioned U.S. aircraft or its crew. Since that time no further information whatsoever has been received concerning this issue.

The draft note goes on to reject the U.S. government's call for review by the International Court of Justice and also rejects the U.S. government's view that Soviet territorial waters are limited to three miles.<sup>39</sup>

The United States did not accept the Soviet position. As the following memorandum to the President indicates, in the view of Secretary of State Dulles, U.S. citizens and USAF personnel from the 1950 Privateer incident were being held alive in the Soviet Union in 1955.

#### MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

(Secret)<sup>40</sup>

Date: July 18, 1955

Subject: Americans Detained in the Soviet Union

The American people share with other peoples of the world a real concern about the imprisonment of some of their countrymen in the Soviet Union. Most of these persons have been held since World War II. It is time to liquidate problems rising out of that War so that we may proceed with greater mutual trust to the solution of major issues facing the world today.

<sup>39</sup>"Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>40</sup>Declassified July 30, 1991.

Of greatest concern to American people are reports reaching the United States about Americans still being held in Soviet prison camps. The American Embassy in Moscow has made many representations on this subject. While we appreciate the recent release of several Americans, others still remain in Soviet custody. On July 16 the American Embassy in Moscow gave the Foreign Office a list of eight American citizens about whose detention in the Soviet Union we have information from returning prisoners of war. Any action you would take to bring about the early release of these particular persons would help relations between our countries.

We have also received a number of reports from returning European prisoners of war that members of the crew of the U.S. Navy Privateer, shot down over the Baltic Sea on April 18, 1950, are alive and in Soviet prison camps. We are asking for their repatriation and that of other American citizens being held in the Soviet Union not only because of general humanitarian principles, but also because such action is called for under the Litvinov-Roosevelt Agreement of 1933.

(Signed) John Foster Dulles

The United States government continued to suspect that some U.S. air crewmen were imprisoned in the USSR. On June 20, 1956, the DoS sent the following query to the American Embassies at Moscow and Tokyo:<sup>41</sup>

Reference is made to the Department's Airgram A-785 of April 16, 1954 to the American Embassy, Tokyo on the subject "Aircraft Incidents Survivors" and related telegraphic correspondence, including Section 2 of Moscow's telegram to the Department No. 944 of February 1, 1954, final paragraph.

The Department is considering whether it has become appropriate as well as desirable at this time to question the Soviet Government specifically with reference to the detention of American fliers whose presence has been reported by repatriates from Soviet prison camps and detention places, even though the basic information received in

<sup>41</sup>The Washington, D.C., *Evening Star* described this telegram as a "note from the United States Embassy to the Soviet government . . ." July 17, 1956. It is not clear from the records located thus far whether this inquiry was delivered as a note to the Soviet government.

the Department is not as specific as that which has underlain the representations made to the Soviet Government in other cases.

The Soviet Government has already denied knowledge of the whereabouts of any crew members of the B-29 destroyed by Soviet fighters off Hokkaido on October 7, 1952 and the B-50 destroyed by Soviet fighters over the Sea of Japan on July 29, 1953. This Department, however, made no specific inquiry with respect to the detention of survivors of the United States Navy Privateer shot down by Soviet fighters over the Baltic Sea on April 8, 1950, nor with respect to the B-29 missing over the area of the Sea of Japan on June 13, 1952; nor has it made specific representations with respect to the reported detention of United States aviation personnel who may have come into Soviet custody during the Korean hostilities. There have been reports mentioned in the communications under reference, from American, Japanese and other sources indicating specifically the detention of American aviation personnel since 1949 and the possibility that among them are included crew members of such lost or destroyed aircraft. The Embassies are, of course, aware of the widely publicized allegations of the repatriate John Noble, which have been corroborated in part by other repatriates, concerning the Navy Privateer crew. It is believed that the information may be specific enough to justify a departure from the existing practice of identifying by name individual survivors held in detention; and publicity to the request may encourage other repatriates to come forward with information.

Moscow and Tokyo's comments are requested on the general desirability of such action and particularly on the following proposed note.

#### VERBATIM TEXT

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and has the honor to refer to the question of the detention of United States military personnel in the Soviet Union. The United States Government has for some time received, from persons of various nationalities freed from Soviet Government imprisonment during the last several years, reports that they have conversed with, seen or heard reports concerning United States military aviation personnel, belonging either to the United States Air Force or to the United States Navy Air Arm, in actual detention in the Soviet Union. The United States Government has sought in

all such cases to obtain, if possible, precise identification of American nationals detained by the Soviet Government, although it notes that by international law and international practice the Soviet Government is obliged to inform the United States Government first of any American nationals whom the Soviet Government holds in custody or to permit such nationals to communicate with the proper United States authorities. The reports concerning such personnel have now become so persistent and detailed, and so credible, that, although the United States Government is not able to identify by name these American nationals now detained by the Soviet Government, it requests the Soviet Government to inform the United States Government in detail concerning each American military person who has been detained in the Soviet Union at any time since January 1, 1949 of whom the United States Government has not heretofore been informed by the Soviet Government, giving in each case the name of the person and the circumstances underlying his detention.

Specifically, the United States Government is informed and is compelled to believe that the Soviet Government has had and continues to have under detention the following:

1. One or more members of the crew of a United States Navy Privateer-type aircraft which came down in the Baltic Sea area on April 8, 1950. The United States Government has since that time received reports that various members of the crew of this United States aircraft were, and are, detained in Soviet detention places in the Far Eastern area of the Soviet Union. In particular, it is informed, and believes, that in 1950 and in October, 1953 at least one American military aviation person, believed to be a member of the crew of this United States Navy Privateer, was held at Camp No. 20 allegedly near Taishet and Collective Farm No. 25, approximately 54 kilometers from Taishet, under sentence for alleged espionage. This American national was described as having suffered burns on the face and legs in the crash of his aircraft and using crutches or a cane.

Reports have been received from former prisoners of the Soviet Government at Vorkuta that in September 1950 as many as eight American nationals, believed to be members of the crew of the United States Navy Privateer to which reference is made, had been seen in the area of Vorkuta in September 1950. One stated that he was serving a twenty-five year espionage sentence and had been a member of a downed United States aircraft.

For the information of the Soviet Government, the crew of the United States Navy Privateer when it departed for its flight over the high seas of the Baltic consisted of the following United States Navy personnel, all nationals of the United States:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Serial Number</i>
Fette, John H.	Lt.	320676 USNR
Seeschaf, Howard W.	Lt.	264095 USN
Reynolds, Robert D.	Lt. jg	368573 USN
Burgess, Tommy L.	Ens.	506762 USN
Danens Jr., Joe H.	AD1	3685438 USN
Thomas, Jack W.	AD1	2242750 USN
Beckman, Frank L.	AT1	2799076 USN
Purcell, Edward J.	CT3	2540438 USN
Rinnier Jr., Joseph N.	AT3	2542600 USN
Bourassa, Joseph Jay	AL3	9539864 USN

2. One or more members of the crew of a United States Air Force B-29 which came down on June 13, 1952, either over the Sea of Japan or near the Kamchatka area of the Soviet Union. An officer, believed by the United States Government to have been a member of this crew, was observed in October, 1953 in a Soviet hospital north of Magadan near the crossing of the Kolyn River between Elgen and Debin at a place called [illegible]. This officer stated that he had been convicted, wrongfully, under [illegible] of Article 58 of the Soviet Penal Code.

3. While the foregoing specific cases involve the crew members of two aircraft, it may well be that the Soviet Government has in its custody members of the crews of other United States aircraft, particularly crew members of aircraft engaged on behalf of the United Nations Command side of the military action in Korea since 1950.

The United States Government desires that the Soviet Government makes its inquiry on the foregoing subject as thoroughly as possible but that it keep this Embassy informed of progress as soon as possible.

An early response as to the Soviet Government's intentions with respect to the present request will be appreciated.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup>From State #CA-10165, to Moscow and Tokyo (Confidential), June 20, 1956, 794.5411/6-2056.

On July 16, 1956, the United States government sent a note to the Soviet government "requesting information concerning American airmen who had been lost under circumstances which lead some to believe that the airmen might have been detained by the Soviet Government." The Soviet Government replied on August 13, 1956, "that a careful investigation by appropriate Soviet authorities had established that no American citizens from the personnel of the United States Air Force or Navy were on the territory of the Soviet Union."<sup>43</sup>

### September 10, 1956

On September 10, 1956, a USAF RB-50 took off from Yokota Air Base, Japan, to perform a routine reconnaissance flight over the Sea of Japan.

The aircraft was plotted by radar on the outbound course over the coast of Japan and again at 0549 hours while approximately 200 miles west of Niigata, Honshu, Japan. No further contact was made with the RB-50 or its crew.

Typhoon conditions with winds ranging from 70-80 knots were present in the Sea of Japan caused by typhoon Emma. The crew had been alerted of the location of the typhoon. When the aircraft failed to return to Yokota Air Base, an immediate communications check was initiated with negative results. An extensive organized search followed, utilizing surface vessels operating in the Sea of Japan and many aircraft from bases in and around Japan. None of the missing personnel, survival equipment, or any wreckage was ever found. The search was suspended on 18 September 1956. Although briefed to fly no closer than 120 miles from Communist controlled territory, a remote possibility existed that the aircraft commander may have elected to fly toward unfriendly territory and may have crashed or landed in Soviet waters or territory; therefore the crew was declared missing.

On 13 October 1956, the US Embassy in Moscow requested the assistance of the USSR in obtaining whatever information they

<sup>43</sup>Letter from William B. Macomber, Jr., to Senator Thomas H. Kuchel, April 10, 1959, 611.61241/4-1059.

might have regarding the loss of the RB-50. A reply from the Soviet Government received on 13 November 1956 stated the Soviets had no knowledge of the fate of this crew.

The crew members were continued in a missing status until 31 December 1956 when their status was administratively changed by the Department of the Air Force to deceased. Their remains have never been recovered and no further information has ever been received concerning their fate.<sup>44</sup>

### June 27, 1958

On June 27, 1958, at 18:30 hours, a U.S. C-118 violated the Soviet state border in the area south of Yerevan. According to a report to the CPSU Central Committee from the Operational Department of National Air Defense Forces Headquarters:

The violator was flying at an altitude of 5,000 meters at a speed of 500 kilometers per hour. The intruder violated the territory of the USSR up to 170 kilometers.

<sup>44</sup>"Request for Details of Service Cold War Era POW/MIA Cases," Fact Sheet: September 10, 1956, incident. The crew of the RB-50 lost on September 10, 1956 included the following:

Major Lorin C. Disbrow	12436A
Captain Rodger A. Fees	A02084831
Captain William J. McLaughlin	A0842571
Captain Pat P. Taylor	A0591432
First Lieutenant Peter J. Rahaniotes	A03025634
Second Lieutenant Richard T. Kobayashi	A03058581
Technical Sergeant Palmer D. Arrowood	AF35769407
Technical Sergeant Bobby R. Davis	AF18273630
Staff Sergeant Raymond D. Johnson	AF19452601
Staff Sergeant Paul W. Swinehart	AF19452599
Staff Sergeant Theodorus J. Trias	AF18417365
Airman First Class John E. Beisty	AF15297815
Airman First Class William H. Ellis	AF16439500
Airman First Class Wayne J. Fair	AF17367892
Airman First Class Harry S. Maxwell, Jr.	AF19473352
Airman First Class Leo J. Sloan	AF12324556

The alert fighters from the 976th Fighter Regiment, 259th Fighter Aviation Division, Baku Air Defense District (Pilots: Captain Svetichnikov and Senior Lieutenant Zaharov) intercepted the violator at 18:44 in the area 20 kms east of Sevan Lake and forced it by signals to land. The crew of the violator aircraft did not follow the fighters' command to "Go for landing" and continued its flight in the direction of Baku. The national Air Defense command post ordered the fighters to force the plane to land and the fighters executed the order by opening barrage fire. Following this the plane attempted to go in the direction of Iran. Seeing that the violator did not obey the order to land, the fighters, by command post instructions, opened fire and set fire to it.

Five men dropped from the plane by parachute while another four landed with the burning aircraft at Gindarh field (105 kms southeast of Kardamir).

The remaining parts of the surface and tail, belonging to a four-engine military transport plane of the type C-118, have the insignia of the USAF and number 13822. The remains of the burned plane are being examined.

Out of nine American servicemen two were slightly burned.

On board of the violator aircraft were:

1. Colonel Brenier
  2. Major Lails
  3. Major Allen
  4. Major Krans
  5. Captain Cane
  6. Lieutenant Leger
- A sergeant and two Army soldiers.

... The detained American servicemen were delivered to Kirovabad where interrogations are being conducted.<sup>45</sup>

Published reports indicate that the entire crew was returned to U.S. military control within a fortnight.

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<sup>45</sup>Report signed by Sokolovsky and Iakovlev.



## September 2, 1958

On September 2, 1958, a USAF C-130 transport was shot down over the territory of the Soviet Union. According to the Department of Defense the C-130 crossed the border into

Soviet territory in the vicinity of Kinegi, Turkey. Within seconds, it was attacked by three Soviet jet aircraft, crashed and burned inside Soviet Armenia. Six remains (four of which were identified) were returned by Soviet authorities. The Soviets denied the interception of the C-130 and knowledge of any other members not returned by them. The missing status of the other 13 personnel was terminated on 16 November 1961 by a determination that they died at the time of the incident. No further information has been received regarding their fate and their remains have not been recovered.<sup>46</sup>

Valentin Sozinov, Commander of the Soviet Detached Transcaucasian Air Defense Corps, was responsible for giving the order to shoot down the C-130. Sozinov offered his version of events in 1992:

They had 17 people on board because they had two crews, an old crew that was showing the border to the new people. The border is very complex. As a rule such planes would fly along the border, following a direct line. The planes would usually go right up to the Iranian border, then make a u-turn and go back. They did that

<sup>46</sup>"Request for Details of Service Cold War Era POW/MIA Cases," Fact Sheet: September 2, 1958, incident. The crew of the C-130 included the following:

Captain Paul E. Duncun	A0940198
Captain Edward J. Jeruss	(remains returned)
Captain Rudy J. Swiestra	(remains returned)
First Lieutenant John E. Simpson	(remains returned)
First Lieutenant Ricardo M. Villareal	(remains returned)
Master Sergeant George P. Petrochilos	AF7024965
Technical Sergeant Arthur L. Mello	AF13172608
Staff Sergeant Leroy Price	AF15436645
Airman First Class Robert J. Oshinskie	AF13515243
Airman Second Class Archie T. Bourg, Jr.	AF18485513
Airman Second Class James E. Ferguson, Jr.	AF16534397
Airman Second Class Joel H. Fields	AF15557141
Airman Second Class Harold T. Kamps	AF27883421
Airman Second Class Gerald C. Maggiacomo	AF21292518
Airman Second Class Clement O. Mankins	AF13568343
Airman Second Class Gerald H. Madeiros	AF12495367
Airman Second Class Robert H. Moore	AF18477757

every day, twice a day, early in the morning and before sunset. They were conducting reconnaissance of the Khaplyansky firing range.

In this case the plane was not following the direct line. They wanted to show how to follow the actual border line without violating it. So he was precisely following the border line. But when he was near Leninakan he decided to have some fun or something. Instead of turning to the right he followed a direct line. He violated the airspace of the USSR.

A general on duty woke me up in the morning and reported to me that the regular everyday flight of the recon plane was unusual. He said the plane was following the border, not the direct line as usual. I asked him to watch the plane. I ordered a couple of planes to escort it. Then I went out and saw the plane myself as it drew that complex line. Then I ordered two more planes to take off. And when the violation happened we had to react.<sup>47</sup>

Sozinov ordered the C-130 to be attacked and shot down after it crossed the border into Soviet airspace. A transcript of the recording of the conversation between the Soviet fighters and ground control was released by the Department of State on February 5, 1959.

#### TRANSCRIPT

#### SOVIET ATTACK ON USAF C-130

SEPTEMBER 2, 1958<sup>48</sup>

[Asterisks indicate break in transcript from static. The identification numbers of the planes are 582, 583, 201, 218, and 577. At times the pilots in their conversation eliminate the first digit and use "18" for "218" and "82" for "582" etc. "Roger" was used by U.S. translators as a "reasonably idiomatic equivalent of the Russian words *Vas ponyal* whose literal meaning is 'I understand you.'"]

<sup>47</sup>Paul M. Cole, interview with General Valentin Sozinov, Moscow, March 30, 1992.

<sup>48</sup>"Documents on U.S. Plane's Disappearance Over Soviet Union," *New York Times*, February 6, 1959.

I am at maximum speed.

Roger.

What is yours?

Three thousand [meters].

I read you excellently.

583, I read excellently.

Understood. Altitude 100 [10,000 meters]

Understood.

In the northwest, about seven balls here [70 percent undercast or cloud cover]

Very poor. Almost none.

130? [compass course]

Roger, 130. [compass course]

582, I have taken course 330, altitude 80 [Altitude 8,000 meters]

Roger, I am taking.

You are understood, altitude 80 [8,000 meters]

Roger, 40 kilometers [Not clear. Possible distance from takeoff.]

\*\*\* Poor, I cannot see the orientation point yet.

No, not visible, it doesn't matter.

45 \*\*\* [not clear]

180 I have taken [course]

201, passed the second [201, one of the fighters]

I am 201. I can see the fence well. [Fence—border between Turkey and Soviet Armenia.]

Roger.

Roger. Proceed in a slight climb toward your point.

\*\*\* Altitude 100 [10,000 meters]

My course is 200.

Roger. \*\*\*

Roger. I have already turned toward the point, over 136. Now I am turning to 180. [136, 180—check points on ground.]

I am turning toward 135. [check point]

Yes, I am over 136 now. [check point]

Roger.

Roger. I am approaching your point.

I am turning to 180. I am taking \*\*\* to 135. [check points]

Roger. \*\*\*

Roger, I am approaching your point.

My altitude is 110. [11,000 meters]

Roger. I am looking.

I am climbing, I am 201, I am climbing.

Roger.

No, I \*\*\*

I am looking.

To the south, there is, 2-3 balls. [20-30 percent cloud cover]

582, I see the target, to the right.

I see the target, a large one.

Its altitude is 100, as you said. [10,000 meters]

I am 201, I see the target.

Attack!

I am 201, I am attacking the target.

You are understood.

I am attacking the target.

Stand by.

The target is a large one.

Roger.

Attack, attack, 218, attack.

Stand by.

582 \*\*\*

Roger.

Roger.

Attack by four fourths. [Evidently the quarter of attack from the indicated course, from the left rear.]

\*\*\*

The target is a transport, four-engined.

Roger.

Roger.

\*\*\*

201, I am attacking the target.

\*\*\*

218 \*\*\*

\*\*\* 201

Target speed is 300 [kilometers, or 180 mph]. I am going along with it. It is turning toward the fence.

\*\*\*the target is burning.

There's a hit.

\*\*\*

The target is burning, 582.

The target is banking.

It is going toward the fence.

\*\*\*open fire\*\*\*

218, are you attacking?

Yes, yes, I.

The target is burning\*\*\*

The tail assembly is falling off the target.

82, do you see me? I am in front of the target.

\*\*\*

\*\*\* Look!

Oh?

Look at him. He will not get away. He is already falling.

Yes, he is falling. I will finish him off, boys. I will finish him off on the run.

The target has lost control, it is going down.

Now the target will fall.

\*\*\*

82, a little to the right.

The target has turned over\*\*\*

\*\*\*

The target is falling\*\*\*

218 \*\*\* no?

Do you see me?

\*\*\* Form up. \*\*\*

82, I see. I am watching the target. I see.

Aha, you see, it is falling.

Yes \*\*\* form up, go home.

After my third pass, the target started burning.

\*\*\* In succession.

\*\*\*

Roger. I am turning \*\*\*

Roger.

16, 577, give the altitude, mission. [16—ground station; 577—a plane]

Who asked? I did not understand.

\*\*\*

577

Altitude 100, toward 135. [10,000 meters; 135—check point]

Roger.

Repeat, where are you?

On the left, on the left, below.

Well, let's form up, follow.

Let's go.

[The rest of the transcript recounts the conversation between the pilots, control points and control tower as the fighters made their way back to base.]

Sozinov remarked, "Imagine my reaction when I heard my own voice on this recording!"

On September 2, 1958, a report to the CPSU Central Committee from personnel on the crash scene noted

that the crew was killed. Five corpses have been found in the plane impact area. Also found were two identification cards issued by the

U.S. Air Force to Captain Rudy Swiestra and Lieutenant Ricardo M. Villareal. The following were identified by identification card:

1. Captain Rudy Swiestra
2. Captain Edward John Jeruss
3. Lieutenant Ricardo M. Villareal
4. Lieutenant John Simpson
5. Sergeant Leroy Price

Ground observations state that no crew members dropped from the aircraft by parachute. . . . The wreckage of the damaged and burned plane violator are being guarded. The Trans-Caucasian military district command has received instructions to bury the crew members.<sup>49</sup>

On September 24, 1958, the remains of six members of the C-130 crew were turned over to U.S. officials.

Allegations have been made that the majority of the crew survived and was captured and retained by Soviet forces.

According to the speculation of one author, the airmen

in the rear [of the C-130] may have bailed out or been saved by Soviet soldiers "who arrived at the scene within minutes after the crash." The men in the rear of the plane would have included highly trained electronic intelligence experts, prized catches for Soviet military intelligence. The Soviets had no intention of revealing the status of the missing men.<sup>50</sup>

The description of how the men allegedly survived does not square with eyewitness testimony or with Soviet archival material. Sozinov, who was on the crash scene two hours after the C-130 went down, said even then

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<sup>49</sup>Report signed by I. Konev and S. Biryov.

<sup>50</sup>*Soldiers of Misfortune*, p. 218. The authors are not specific concerning the nature of the alleged "Soviet soldiers who arrived at the scene within minutes after the crash." Sozinov said this characterization of the sequence of events is incompatible with reality.

I couldn't approach the site. There were flames everywhere. We did not manage to get any bodies out of the wreck, just burned pieces. The plane crashed. No one survived. It was simply impossible to give back all of the bodies because they had been completely burned.

The report of the forensic medical team that examined the crash site supports Sozinov's recollections. The report noted the following data points:

1. The remains of the first four corpses were extracted from the burning wreckage on September 2. The remains of another two corpses were removed in the morning of September 3 and another on September 3 at 17:00.
2. Near the still smoldering wreckage of the plane, the carbonized remains of human bodies were laid. They resembled shapeless black boulders.
3. Based on the examination of the remains of the foreign plane crew it is established that the carbonized parts of the human bodies found at the plane's impact point belong to seven individuals.
4. It is impossible to identify the dead due to the great destruction of the corpses caused by the fact that some were partially burned and others were completely burned.<sup>51</sup>

Sozinov added that those like Sauter who assert the Soviets captured survivors from the wreck of the C-130 are indulging "in a sensation which Americans like so much. Of course, everybody wants people to survive." Those who believe the C-130 crew parachuted to safety run the risk of confusing the June 27, 1958, incident with the September 1958 incident that occurred in the same general geographic location.

The U.S. government attempted from the beginning to obtain a full accounting for the other 11 crew members. On September 9, 1958, Gromyko, on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Malinin, on behalf of the Ministry of Defense, submitted a draft note to the

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<sup>51</sup>The forensic medical examination was conducted by Lt. Colonel Krukovsky, and witnessed by Colonel Skljarenko and Lt. Col. Vernik.



Central Committee of the CPSU. The draft, intended for delivery to the U.S. government, dealt with the "violation of the state boundary of the USSR by an American military airplane on September 2, 1958 near Yerevan."<sup>52</sup> The note was handed to the U.S. embassy three days later. On September 13, the American Embassy responded, which prompted the following memorandum to the Central Committee of the CPSU from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, and the Committee for State Security:

September 13 the U.S. Embassy sent a response in which an attempt is made to depict the affair in such a way as if Soviet fighter aircraft intercepted the U.S. airplane in the area of the Soviet-Turkish border around Kars; information is requested concerning the 17 member crew and the note contains a request to allow representatives of the Embassy accompanied by technical experts to investigate the circumstances of the crash onsite, to identify bodies and to undertake steps to transfer crew members' remains to the appropriate U.S. authorities. The response is clearly provocative in nature.

The MFA of the USSR, the Ministry of Defense and the Committee for State Security, under the counsel of Ministers of the USSR prepared a draft response to this U.S. note. In our response, the fabrications contained in the Embassy's note are decisively rejected. The request of the Americans about a trip to the crash area is ignored in our answer. In that connection, we have taken into consideration the fact that the region in which the U.S. plane went down is a border area, closed to foreigners and it is not desirable to admit Americans to that area.

Insofar as the Embassy's request is concerned about transferring to the U.S. side the remains of crew members, it is considered expedient to satisfy that request, after having seen to the transfer of the corpses of the dead crew members to the Committee for State Security.

A draft of the resolution is attached.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>"Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>53</sup>Memorandum from V. Kuznetsov, I. Kopev, P. Ivashutes (Secret), to Central Committee of the CPSU, September 15, 1958, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

The draft is entitled, "On the Response to the U.S. Embassy's Note of 13 September concerning a U.S. military airplane which crashed near Yerevan." The two questions put to the Central Committee for approval were first, for permission to deliver the attached note, and second, to instruct the Committee on State Security and the Ministry of Defense to prepare and transfer "to the U.S. side the remains of the six crew members of the U.S. airplane which crashed near Yerevan." The Soviet side noted:

In the MFA note [of September 12] it is stated that said airplane crashed and burned and that at the crash site human remains were found on the basis of which it can be supposed that 6 crew members of the airplane perished. The Soviet side does not have any other information concerning members of the airplane crew.

The Soviet government decisively rejects the allegation contained in the Embassy's note to the effect that Soviet fighter aircraft intercepted the said airplane in the area of the Soviet-Turkish border near Kars as totally unfounded and provocational.

Such an unworthy attempt to place blame for the crash of the U.S. plane and its crew on the Soviet side has been undertaken apparently with a view to somehow justifying the totally obvious fact of the intentional violation by this airplane of the state border of the USSR.

... The Government of the U.S. ought to do one thing: once and for all forbid its military aircraft from violating the state border of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government expects precisely such measures from the U.S. government.

Insofar as the Embassy's request to transfer the remains of the crew members of the incinerated airplane is concerned, appropriate Soviet authorities are prepared to transfer those remains to a representative of U.S. authorities.<sup>54</sup>

Three months later Gromyko submitted another memorandum on this subject to the Central Committee:

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<sup>54</sup>Draft attached to CPSU memorandum, September 15, 1958.

The Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. Comrade Menshikov has communicated that he was invited to the State Department by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Murphy who made an oral démarche concerning the U.S. plane which September 2 of this year violated the state border of the USSR near Yerevan. (Cable No. 2196 from D.C.)

In connection with this Murphy claimed that presumably the airplane which violated the Soviet state border was following the beam of a Soviet radio transmitter and was shot down by Soviet fighter planes, and "eyewitnesses" saw how parachutists were jumping out of the airplane. Murphy further stated that since the remains of only six crew members of this plane have been given to the Americans while there were 17 people on board, that 11 people must have remained on Soviet territory and that possibly some of them are alive.

Murphy further stated that in the newspaper "Soviet Aviation" from September 19 and 20, articles were published by a Major A. Moshkov entitled, "High Mastery" which confirm in Murphy's opinion the fact that the U.S. plane was shot down by Soviet fighter planes. Murphy also alleged that the Americans have a tape recording of conversation of Soviet fighter pilots among themselves and with ground stations.

Comrade Menshikov refused to discuss the question raised by Murphy having stated that concerning the question of the U.S. airplane which on September 2 violated the state border of the USSR near Yerevan, the appropriate response had already been given by the Soviet side in Moscow. He categorically rejected Murphy's allegation that Soviet pilots had shot down that U.S. plane, he refused to listen to the tape recording fabricated by the Americans and he rejected the fabrications of the Americans in relation to the article in the newspaper "Soviet Aviation."

It is absolutely apparent that the U.S. side by means of various fabrications is attempting to drag us into a new discussion of this question in order to divest itself of the responsibility for the violation of the Soviet border by an American plane and place this responsibility on the Soviet side.

In connection with the fact that the position of the Soviet government concerning the said U.S. airplane has already been put forth in three notes sent to the U.S. Embassy and published in the Soviet

press, the MFA of the USSR would deem it appropriate at the present time not to engage in a discussion of this question with the Americans and to confine itself to the response which was given by Comrade Menshikov in his conversation with Murphy. Should the American side mention this, they ought to be told that the notes sent by the Soviet side on this question and also the response of Ambassador Menshikov of November 14 to Murphy's statement have totally exhausted this question and the Soviet side has nothing further to say on the subject."<sup>55</sup>

The DoS noted in January 1959 that it continued to press "the case of the missing members of the crew of the C-130 transport which crashed on September 2, 1958 in Soviet Armenia."<sup>56</sup>

On May 4, 1959, American Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson delivered an aide-mémoire to Premier Nikita Khrushchev "in which is expressed concern by the President of the U.S. over the fate of 11 American pilots who presumably having been aboard a U.S. C-130 which violated the state border of the USSR September 2, 1958 crashed in the area of Yerevan." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared an aide-mémoire for the American Embassy which was to be delivered in the event it should be necessary to publish it in response should the American side publish its own.<sup>57</sup> On August 1, 1959, Vice President Nixon wrote to Khrushchev "a request to present information concerning the fate of 11 Americans who presumably were located onboard" the U.S. C-130. Nixon referred to the fate of the crew as "a serious impediment to improvement of relations between the USSR and the U.S." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs drafted a reply for Khrushchev.<sup>58</sup>

In the draft letter from Khrushchev to Nixon, the Russian side said the following:

<sup>55</sup>Memorandum from A. Gromyko (Secret), to Central Committee of the CPSU, December 6, 1958, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>56</sup>Macomber to Lausche, January 13, 1959.

<sup>57</sup>Memorandum from V. Kuznetsov (Secret) to Central Committee of the CPSU, May 15, 1959, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>58</sup>Memorandum from A. Gromyko (Secret), to Central Committee of the CPSU, August 17, 1959, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

I will say straight away that for you to raise this question after the Soviet government on its part has done everything possible to clarify the circumstances of this crash and having exhaustively informed the American side about the results of the investigation cannot help but call forth from us, at a minimum, surprise. This cannot be evaluated in any other fashion than as an attempt to create artificial impediments to the improvement of U.S.-Soviet relations.

The Government of the U.S. has already been informed that on September 2, 1958 Soviet fighter planes did not shoot down any U.S. aircraft whatsoever and that on that day near the City of Yerevan a U.S. military aircraft crashed and at the crash site human remains were discovered. On the basis of those remains which on September 24, 1958 were transferred to the U.S. side, it was possible to assume that six crew members had perished. No other U.S. pilots from said airplane were found in the Soviet Union and consequently they are not here.

I appreciate the feelings of the relatives of those who perished in the plane crash. However, it is absolutely apparent that the ones who have to answer before U.S. public opinion and before the relatives of those who perished are those who direct implementation of such flights by American airplanes.<sup>59</sup>

On January 28, 1959, Senator Everett Dirksen passed along a request for information to the Department of State concerning the suggestion that "American airmen who were on board a United States Air Force C-130 transport plane which disappeared in Soviet Armenia might be imprisoned on the mainland of China."<sup>60</sup>

The Department of State responded that "the United States Government knows of no American servicemen in the hands of the Chinese or Korean Communists, although there are American servicemen missing in the Korean conflict for whom there has been no accounting." Although all of the missing from the Korean War had been

<sup>59</sup>Draft letter Khrushchev to Nixon attached to Gromyko to Central Committee, August 17, 1959.

<sup>60</sup>Letter from Senator Everett M. Dirksen to William B. Macomber Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, January 28, 1959, 611.61241/1-2859. Letter from William B. Macomber to Senator Everett M. Dirksen, February 12, 1959, 611.61241/1-2859.

declared dead, "our Government has made and will continue to make every effort to secure from the Communists a complete accounting for all military personnel missing in Korea and for any other Americans who, evidence indicates, might be held on the Chinese mainland by the Communists." The letter to Senator Dirksen included detailed information about the C-130 loss:

With regard to the eleven members of the C-130 who have not been accounted for, and about whom Senator Lausche is reported to have questioned Mr. Mikoyan, no indication exists at this time that these American servicemen might have been transferred by the Soviet Government to an area under control of the Chinese Communists. Our Government is presently making every just effort to obtain information about the disappearance of the C-130 and the whereabouts of the crew members not yet accounted for. . . . On November 13, 1958 Deputy Under Secretary Murphy called in the Soviet Ambassador and made representations through him to the Soviet Government on the question of the C-130 and the eleven missing members of its crew. The United States will continue to pursue this case vigorously and will continue to review the matter with Soviet officials at every appropriate opportunity.<sup>61</sup>

Efforts to account for the other crew members of the C-130 continued into the 1990s.

### July 1, 1960

On July 1, 1960, a USAF RB-47 departed RAF Station Brize Norton, England, to participate in a navigational training mission over the North and Barents Seas.

While over international waters of the Barents Sea off the coast of the USSR, the aircraft was shot down by a Soviet aircraft. The remains of Major Willard G. Palm, tangled in his parachute, were recovered by the Russians three days later and were returned to U.S. authorities on 25 July 1960. Autopsy determined that the cause of death was drowning. Two other crew members, Captains John R. McKrone and Freeman B. Olmstead, survived the incident and were rescued by a Soviet fishing trawler. They were held prisoner and repatriated to

<sup>61</sup>Macomber to Dirksen, February 12, 1959.

U.S. authorities in January 1961. Major Posa and Captains Goforth and Phillips were never accounted for and Soviet authorities denied having any knowledge of their fate. They were continued in a missing status until 30 June 1961 when their status was administratively changed by the Department of the Air Force by an official report of death. No information has ever been received concerning their fate and their remains have not been recovered.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>"Request for Details of Service Cold War Era POW/MIA Cases," Fact Sheet, July 1, 1960 incident. The crew members of the RB-47 who were not accounted for include the following:

Major Eugene E. Posa	A02088613
Captain Oscar L. Goforth	A03053269
Captain Dean B. Phillips	A03064783

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## RECOVERY AND ACCOUNTING EFFORTS

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter has four purposes: (1) to document what was known to the U.S. government about the location of the remains of deceased servicemen buried during World War II in territory controlled by the USSR and efforts to recover and repatriate these remains; (2) to document efforts to obtain information concerning or the release of U.S. POWs who had been imprisoned by Soviet forces; (3) to document efforts to obtain the release of U.S. air crews whom the U.S. government concluded had been imprisoned in the USSR; and (4) to document efforts to accumulate information on U.S. defectors in Soviet bloc nations.

### LOCATIONS OF REMAINS AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

#### Background

After World War II, the U.S. government recovered the remains of some of the U.S. servicemen who had been buried in USSR territory during the war. The purpose of this section is to document U.S. governmental efforts to determine the location of the remains of U.S. servicemen in USSR territory (and territory occupied by Soviet forces) and to recover these remains.

#### Negotiations with Soviet Forces

As early as 1945, the United States negotiated with Soviet authorities for the right to search, using American Graves Registration person-



nel, in USSR territory to locate and recover the remains of American World War II dead.<sup>1</sup> The recovery effort was initially directed by the War Department's Service, Supply, and Procurement Division.<sup>2</sup> Many restrictions were placed by the Soviets on the U.S. search and recovery efforts:

The Search and Recovery Teams were not permitted to move freely in the Soviet Zone, but were compelled to adhere to a Soviet previously approved itinerary; a Russian officer always had to accompany the Team and generally one or two Russian enlisted men. The personnel of the Search and Recovery Teams were permitted to ask questions only of Germans concerning the bodies. Oftentimes the Germans were told to shut up by the Russian Officer accompanying the Team. During the night a Russian guard was stationed outside the door of the Team's hotel rooms. Members of the Team were not allowed to leave the room alone and all had to eat together under guard. As a consequence, subsequent negotiations were later undertaken through the Department of State.<sup>3</sup>

The Soviet side demanded exact locations and names and insisted that the costs of recovery efforts be covered by the U.S. government. The U.S. government covered these expenses from a fund established by the Quartermaster General.

Soviet records show that at least four American airmen were exhumed and repatriated from the Far East Zone in 1947. On July 6, 1947 the following memorandum for the record was prepared:

Acting this year and date, a board composed of a Chairman, Lt. Colonel F. P. Kukarin and the following members—Chief of the Pathology Laboratory Major of the Medical Service A. A. Terekhov and Forensic Medical Expert Captain of the Medical Service V. S. Terekhov—executed the exhumation of the body of the USAF Corporal Matthew M. Gladek who was killed in action on June 10,

<sup>1</sup>Memorandum from Major General H. Feldman, The Quartermaster General (Restricted), January 17, 1950. Subject: Removal of Remains of World War II Dead, RG92 Office of the QMG General Correspondence Geographic File Russia.

<sup>2</sup>Memorandum from Lt. General LeR. Lutes (Unclassified), to Major General S. J. Chamberlin, April 23, 1947, RG92, Office of the Quartermaster General, General Correspondence Geographic File, 1946–1948, Russia.

<sup>3</sup>Memorandum for the record, RG92.

1945 in air combat with Japanese fighters over the Island of Shimushiu.

Purpose of the exhumation: Return to the motherland.

The body exhumed is dressed for burial and wrapped in a white linen shroud, placed in a wooden coffin with the latter enclosed in a metal coffin of zinc-coated steel; the lid of which is bolted, hermetically soldered. Soldered to the lid is a brass plaque bearing the surname of the deceased.<sup>4</sup>

Similar statements have been found for a total of three Americans. They are the following:

USAF Corporal Matthew M. Gladek, July 6, 1947

USAF Sergeant Paul Utchek, July 6, 1947

USAF Sergeant Thomas E. Ring, July 6, 1947

In addition, a receipt for the transfer of the three to Vladivostok, where custody was transferred to representatives of the American Fifth Fleet, has been found.

On May 6, 1948, the Department of State submitted to the Soviet Foreign Ministry a list of 31 Americans buried in USSR territory. On July 8, 1948, the United States requested the return of 23 remains, as shown in Table 3.1.

On June 21, 1948, the Soviet Foreign Ministry notified the U.S. Embassy that the

responsible Soviet authorities have declared their readiness to carry out themselves exhumation of remains of American citizens buried in the territory of the USSR and to deliver remains to Berlin where they can be transferred to American authorities.<sup>5</sup>

The cost of this process was not indicated at first. On October 27, 1948, the Soviet authorities "were furnished a list of names and burial locations of all U.S. World War II dead interred on Soviet territory for

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<sup>4</sup>Witnessed by Lt. Colonel Kukarin, Major Terekhov, Captain Remartchuk, and Captain Komashov.

<sup>5</sup>From Moscow #1164, to State (Restricted), June 23, 1948.

**Table 3.1**  
**List of Deceased Personnel Buried in USSR as of 8 July 1948**

Name	Rank	Service Number	Burial Location
1. Allen, Keith N.	Lt. Col.	03 031 21	American-English Cemetery, Murmansk, USSR
2. Betancourt, Juan	Fireman	Bk.No. 10 9177	Archangel, USSR
3. Collins, Edward A.	GM3c	71 114 92	Murmansk, USSR
4. Dailey, Domingo	Messman	Z 384 506	American-English Cemetery, Murmansk, USSR
5. Estle, Raymond C.	1st Lt.	0 753 279	U.S. Cemetery, Novi Senzhari, USSR. 49° 20' lat., 34° 20' long., 25 miles outside Poltava, USSR
6. Gestido, Jose	Fireman	Z 16 402	Archangel, USSR
7. Hall, Edward J.	Oiler	Z 11 561	Archangel, USSR
8. Heindel, George J.	Ch. Eng.	Z 27 455	American-English Cemetery, Murmansk, USSR
9. Hendrickson, Jacob	Ch. Eng.	Z 215 668	Foreign Cemetery, Archangel, USSR
10. Hibbard, Paul R.	1st Lt.	0 758 565	U.S. Cemetery, Novi Senzhari, USSR. Plot A, Row 1, Grave 4
11. Johannson, Eric A.	Bosn	Z 137 504	Small Island, NW of Molotovsk, USSR
12. Kerchner, Richard G.	Pfc	6 947 136	U.S. Cemetery, Novi Senzhari, USSR. Plot A, Row 1, Grave 5
13. Larsen, Richard C.	Ch. Off.	Bk.No. 105 458	Second Christian Cemetery, Odessa, USSR
14. Lukacek, Joseph G.	F/O	T - 61 544	U.S. Cemetery, Novi Senzhari, USSR. Plot A, Row 1, Grave 1
15. Neighbours, Fleet B.	Ch. Stew	Z 112 406	Archangel, USSR
16. Nies, Walter	S/Sgt	37 307 545	Heydekrug, POW Camp No. 6, Grave 3, East Prussia
17. Robinson, Roy A.	Slc	611 06 37	City Cemetery, Murmansk, in lots for foreigners, USSR
18. Roland, Donald R.	Lt. (jg)	175 115	British Plot, Koosnechetskoye Cemetery, Archangel, USSR

Table 3.1 (continued)

Name	Rank	Service Number	Burial Location
19. Simpson, Donald C.	Sgt	38 412 844	U.S. Cemetery, Novi Senzhari, USSR. Plot A, Row 3 Grave 3
20. Teaff, William F.	T/Sgt	35 586 750	Heydekrug POW Camp No. 6, Grave 4
21. Timmerman, Lyle E.	Cpl	12 138 246	Second Christian Cemetery, Odessa, USSR. Plot 127, Row 7, Grave 2
22. Walker, George B.	S/Sgt	34 147 240	Heydekrug POW Camp No. 6, Grave 2
23. Yates, Ted	Sgt	38 148 940	Second Christian Cemetery, Odessa, USSR. Plot 127, Row 7, Grave 1.

SOURCE: Embassy of the United States of America, Note No. 268, to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, May 6, 1948.

whom information as to burial location was known."<sup>6</sup> In December 1949, however, the Soviet government notified the U.S. government that the cost to "exhume and deliver to Berlin, Germany the remains of 16 World War II dead now buried in various Russian cemeteries" would be 204,000 Rubles (\$25,500 at prevailing exchange rate). There was no indication of how this sum was derived, but since the exchange rate was artificial, any cost accounting would have been irrational anyway.

Of these, the Soviet government was able to locate 16 of the 24. On December 22, 1949, the Soviet Foreign Ministry sought

reimbursement in the amount of 122,977 rubles for sums reported as having been incurred by them in connection with the exhumation, preparation, casketing, and transportation of the bodies of six (6) United States airmen whose remains were interred within Soviet territory.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Feldman memorandum, January 17, 1950.

<sup>7</sup>Memorandum from Commander-in-Chief, General Headquarters Far East Command, to Quartermaster General, December 22, 1949.

These six had been shot down near Cape Lopatka on June 10, 1945. The United States asked permission for a U.S. Graves Registration search and recovery team to enter Cape Lopatka to recover the remains, but this was not permitted by the Soviets. The remains were recovered in September 1948 and transferred to Japan and on to the United States. The six U.S. airmen were the following:

Denton, Leslie C., Jr.  
Eiser, J. Nathan  
Ernser, Roland R.  
Irving, Edward J.  
Lang, Frederick A.  
Lord, Orvil H.

Each set of remains was recovered from the far eastern area of the Soviet Union. The Soviet side submitted the bill for the first time on October 5, 1949.<sup>8</sup> The cost of the operation was covered by the United States based on an estimate provided by the Soviet side.<sup>9</sup> The remains were transferred to U.S. authorities in Japan.<sup>10</sup> No records have been located yet that show remains of any other American personnel were recovered.

As of January 17, 1950 the Quartermaster General estimated that a general area could be identified for the graves of 646 "remains not yet recovered from Russian occupied and controlled territory" (Table 3.2).

The 646 figure did not include remains to be recovered from the Mediterranean Zone (Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Albania) or those in the Far East Zone. On November 17, 1950, the Soviet Foreign Ministry notified the U.S. government that it "for \$1,000 is willing to open unidentified graves at Matzicken POW Camp in an effort to locate the

<sup>8</sup>Letter from Lt. Colonel N. Beznosikov, Allied Council for Japan, Office of the Member for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to Major General E. Almond, Chief of Staff, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, October 5, 1949.

<sup>9</sup>Letter from Colonel GEO. W. Hinman, Jr., to Chief, Division of Protective Services, Department of State, July 29, 1948.

<sup>10</sup>Letter from Lt. Colonel N. Beznosikov, Office of the Member of the Allied Council for Japan, to Chief of Staff Major General E. Almond, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, October 4, 1949.

**Table 3.2**  
**Remains Not Yet Recovered from**  
**USSR Territory: January 1950**

Soviet Zone	419
Russia	15
Austria	122
Poland	20
Czechoslovakia	0
Hungary	28
Romania	42
Total	646

missing bodies of Nies, Walker, and Teaff." No records have been located that shed light on the outcome of this offer.

The World War II remains recovery issue was a high-visibility political topic in parts of the United States in the 1950s. In New York City, for example, hundreds of Americans signed a petition demanding from the President of the United States the following:

1. The immediate termination of the shipment of UNRAA supplies to Russia and all of those satellite nations in the areas where we are forbidden the right to search.
2. The postponement of any negotiations for loans or any other benefits to those nations.

Unless and until our Graves Registration Organization is accorded complete freedom to carry on a thorough and unhampered search.

It is not clear from records thus far located what became of the graves identified by the United States in USSR territory and that of its allies.

On June 2, 1993, Army Task Force Russia reported the results of an examination of the list of 23 names of individuals once known to be buried in USSR territory; these names are included in Table 3.3.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Memorandum for the Record by Paul H. Vivian, Army Task Force Russia, June 2, 1993.

Table 3.3

**Current Status of Americans Once Buried in USSR Territory****(Boldface type indicates body-not-recovered as of July 1993.)**

	Name	Task Force Russia Assessment
1.	Allen, Keith N.	Buried in Philadelphia National Cemetery, Pennsylvania.
2.	Betancourt, Juan	Listed as buried in Archangel, USSR. On December 31, 1992, TFR sent a message to the American Embassy in Moscow asking that Russian officials be asked to search for this grave. As of June 2, 1993, there had been no response.
3.	Collins, Edward A.	Buried in New York.
4.	<b>Dailey, Domingo</b>	Daily did not die during WW II but rather in December 1945 when his ship, the SS <i>William H. Webb</i> , ran aground near Murmansk. His body was recovered and buried in Murmansk. Subsequent efforts to retrieve his remains failed. The Soviets claimed the remains could not be located. Dailey is carried as a BNR (body-not-recovered) case.
5.	Estle, Raymond C.	Buried in Fort McPherson National Cemetery, New York.
6.	<b>Gestido, Jose</b>	Listed as buried in Archangel, USSR. On December 31, 1992, TFR sent a message to the American Embassy in Moscow asking that Russian officials be asked to search for this grave. As of June 2, 1993, there had been no response.
7.	<b>Hall, Edward J.</b>	Listed as buried in Archangel, USSR. On December 31, 1992, TFR sent a message to the American Embassy in Moscow asking that Russian officials be asked to search for this grave. As of June 2, 1993, there had been no response.
8.	Heindel, George J.	Buried in California.
9.	Hendrickson, Jacob	Buried in Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium.
10.	Hibbard, Paul R.	Buried in Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium.
11.	Johannson, Eric A.	Buried in Ardennes, Belgium.
12.	Kerchner, Richard G.	Buried in Pennsylvania.
13.	Larsen, Richard C.	Buried in Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium.

Table 3.3 (continued)

Name	Task Force Russia Assessment
14. Lukacek, Joseph G.	Buried in Beverly National Cemetery, New Jersey.
15. Neighbours, Fleet B.	Listed as buried in Archangel, USSR. On December 31, 1992, TFR sent a message to the American Embassy in Moscow asking that Russian officials be asked to search for this grave. As of June 2, 1993, there had been no response.
16. Nies, Walter	Listed as buried in Heydekrug POW Camp in contemporary Lithuania. On December 31, 1992, TFR sent a message to the American Embassy in Vilnius asking that the Lithuanian authorities be asked to locate these remains. No official reply as of June 2, 1993.
17. Robinson, Roy A.	Killed in action on February 27, 1943, in the harbor of Murmansk when his ship, the SS <i>Eli Oriente</i> , was attacked by German planes. He was buried in the Murmansk City Cemetery in a lot reserved for foreigners, but the grave, which was only marked with a cross, was unnumbered. Following World War II, the Soviet government reported that the graves of 16 Americans, including Roy Robinson, had been located. In 1950, the Soviets returned 15 American remains. Robinson's remains were not included. On July 20, 1951, the American Embassy in Moscow asked again for Robinson's remains. On December 31, 1951, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied that the remains could not be located. On February 29, 1952, the U.S. government declared the remains of Roy Robinson to be nonrecoverable.
18. Roland, Donald R.	Buried in Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium.
19. Simpson, Donald C.	Buried in Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium.
20. Teaff, William F.	Listed as buried in Heydekrug POW Camp in contemporary Lithuania. On December 31, 1992, TFR sent a message to the American Embassy in Vilnius asking that the Lithuanian authorities be asked to locate these remains. No official reply as of June 2, 1993.
21. Timmerman, Lyle E.	Buried in Canajoharie, New York.



Table 3.3 (continued)

Name	Task Force Russia Assessment
22. Walker, George B.	Listed as buried in Heydekrug POW Camp in contemporary Lithuania. On December 31, 1992, TFR sent a message to the American Embassy in Vilnius asking that the Lithuanian authorities be asked to locate these remains. No official reply as of June 2, 1993.
23. Yates, Ted	Buried in Rocky Ford, Colorado.

## DEPARTMENT OF STATE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF U.S. CITIZENS

### U.S. Policy

The U.S. government did not distinguish among types of American citizens reported or suspected to be in Soviet territory against their will. Whether the individuals were military or civilians, the key test for the U.S. government was citizenship. Thus, historical records do not always distinguish civilians from military until an individual is released from Soviet captivity. This section, therefore, addresses reports of U.S. citizens in Soviet custody and U.S. Department of State efforts to obtain information about them, to verify their citizenship, and to effect their release. The record of U.S. government démarches and requests for information submitted to the Soviet Foreign Ministry is extensive.

The United States participated in the United Nations *ad hoc* Commission on Unrepatriated POWs. In August 1950, the Department of State (DoS) cabled the American Embassy in Canberra, Australia, to update it on the Department's proposal to submit a question, based on Articles 10 and 14 of the UN Charter, to the UN General Assembly on the USSR's "failure to repatriate or otherwise account for POWs and civilian internees detained in Soviet territory."<sup>12</sup> According to this plan, the U.S. case would consist of a "factual record of the

<sup>12</sup>From State #27, to Canberra (Secret), August 16, 1950, 611.61241/8-1650.

Soviet failure either to repatriate or account for vast numbers of German, Japanese, and other POWs as well as civilians deported to the USSR, despite repeated Allied appeals and in clear violation of the Moscow Agreement of 1947, the Potsdam Proclamation of 1945, the SCAP-USSR Agreement of 1946, and other recognized standards of international conduct." The DoS recognized that the Soviets were unlikely to cooperate with any General Assembly resolution on this subject, thus the purpose would be to bring "such a problem forward" to "inform world opinion and exert moral pressure."

### **U.S. Emigrants to the USSR**

Thousands of American citizens moved to the Soviet Union voluntarily following the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. In 1923, about 40 people left San Francisco for the region of Donetz to build an agricultural cooperative they called "California." About the same time, another group left for Odessa where they intended to start a model dairy farm. These people were inspired to build socialism in some cases or simply to get away from the poverty of the Depression. (Economic woes were not supposed to exist in the new socialist paradise.)

Many Americans moved to the Soviet Union in the 1930s after the Soviet government asked Ford to build a car plant there. Among those who settled who thought this was a temporary move, few ever returned to the United States. Victor Hermann, who came to the USSR in 1931 with his father to work in a Ford factory, was arrested in 1937. After many years in the GULAG, including a stretch in Siberia, he obtained permission in 1976 to return to the United States. This was not an isolated case. Many American citizens became trapped after their hopes were shattered by the reality of the Soviet system.<sup>13</sup>

### **U.S. Requests for Information in Moscow**

On October 4, 1949, the American Embassy at Moscow sent a note to Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko at the Soviet Foreign Ministry. This note, shown in Table 3.4, listed the names of 31 American

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<sup>13</sup>Pierre Rigoulot, "Des enfants de l'oncle Sam au goulag," photocopy.

citizens who, in the view of the U.S. government, had been detained for forced labor in the Soviet Union. The names were accompanied by a reference to a previous note or other communication from the American Embassy concerning each of these individuals.

**Table 3.4**  
**American Citizens Detained in the USSR: U.S. Government Notes and Protests**

	Name	Previous Note or Protest
1.	Anna Anton	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
2.	Maria Anna Bayer	#C-160, April 16, 1949
3.	Kate Bassler	#C-106, March 16, 1949
4.	John Benka	#C-257, June 21, 1949
5.	Meczislav Cesliak <sup>a</sup>	#C-326, August 12, 1949
6.	John Hans Dukarm	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
7.	Margaret Gisher	#C-103, March 12, 1949
8.	Ottilia Herbst Gross	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
9.	Theresa Haas	#C-256, June 21, 1949
10.	Katherina Hellman	#C-370, September 2, 1949
11.	Katherina Henkel	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
12.	Ewa Theresa Huber	Personal Note No 464, August 20, 1949
13.	Sofia Kazanskaya <sup>a</sup>	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
14.	Anna Maria Ketz	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
15.	Mary Iohanna Kirshner	#C-85, March 7, 1949
16.	Anna Klein	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
17.	Mikhail Latzkiewicz	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
18.	Vladislava Lazarska	#C-492, August 10, 1948

Table 3.4 (continued)

Name	Previous Note or Protest
19. Joseph Marshall <sup>a</sup>	Personal Note No. 473, August 23, 1949
20. Paulina Marshall <sup>a</sup>	Personal Note No. 473, August 23, 1949
21. Aldona Marshall <sup>a</sup>	Personal Note No. 473, August 23, 1949
22. Anthony Miller, Jr.	#C-512, August 23, 1948
23. Zenon Mulawa	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
24. Hermina E. Shuller	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
25. Wilhelmina Schuster	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
26. Joseph Tearjung, Jr.	Letter to Minister of Foreign Affairs Molotov, March 29, 1948
27. Magdalena Wormittag	#C-86, March 7, 1949
28. Hilda Elizabeta Wagner	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
29. Luisa Wohlfahrt	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948
30. Anna Zilman	#C-111, March 17, 1949
31. Helen Magdalena Zaltner	Letter to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyshinsky, March 29, 1948

SOURCE: American Embassy at Moscow, Note No. 575, October 4, 1949, to His Excellency Mr. A. A. Gromyko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The text of this note was provided by the Russian government in a Russian translation to the Senate Select Committee on MIA/POW Affairs during a visit to Moscow in February 1992. The spelling of the American names, therefore, may not be correct in each case.

<sup>a</sup>Named in Volkogonov's July 30, 1992, *Izvestia* article.

One particularly interesting part of the Russian translation of this American note is the Soviet government's distribution list. The American note was distributed to seven members of the Politburo and to eight Foreign Ministry officials, which indicates that the substance of the note was treated as a serious matter. Important issues raised by the Soviet Foreign Ministry were channeled in this way at

the time, but this document as it was provided by the Russians to the Senate Select Committee staff is missing an important element. The absence of the cover sheet is significant because it would have contained, in a message to Stalin, the Politburo's proposed response. It is common practice for archivists to have a policy for redacting and withholding parts of documents. No such policy has yet been explained by Russian archive officials.

### **Chronological Account of Live Sightings of Alleged U.S. Citizens in USSR**

The quantity and quality of information concerning Americans allegedly held by Soviet authorities is nearly always inadequate. In the Soviet Union, the sources of information and the mobility of U.S. authorities were severely restricted. The governments of Soviet client states did not permit U.S. diplomats to conduct independent inquiries. American citizens and others who attempted to make contact with U.S. authorities ran the risk of detainment and punishment. The primary source of information about Americans alleged to be held in the USSR came from eyewitness accounts made by repatriated prisoners who were sought out and interviewed by U.S. authorities. The U.S. government systematically collected, analyzed, and followed up claims made by repatriated persons from a number of different countries that Americans had been seen in Soviet prisons.

In October 1953, for example, the Soviet Union repatriated a number of Austrian POWs and civilians who had been interned in the USSR since the end of World War II. These returnees were interviewed by U.S. officials to obtain information about the possibility that American citizens were being held in the USSR illegally. The information obtained from these former prisoners and prisoners from other countries who were released and interviewed by U.S. officials provided a base from which the U.S. government was able to make official protests and inquiries to the Soviet government on specific cases of U.S. citizens held in the Soviet Union.

In October 1950, the U.S. Liaison Officer with the French Occupation Forces at Baden Baden notified the Headquarters of the U.S. European Command that a "reliable German source reports the presence in Prison Camp Number 6 near Odessa in Russia about five kilo-

meters northeast of that city . . . [of] about 30 allied prisoners, among whom one or two Americans [were] identified, probably arrested for spying in 1945. The name of one is Harry Lepselter . . ."<sup>14</sup> The following month, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Tokyo, reported to his counterpart in Washington, that an "interrogation of two Japanese repatriates from the USSR reveals the possibility that an American man was being held in Soviet forced labor camps as of 1948."<sup>15</sup> The G-2 report cites that one Japanese informant, repatriated on January 21, 1950, had "seen and talked with an American, name unknown, at the 99-13 PW camp in Karaganda between May and June 1948." The repatriate "heard" that the American was an "ex-GI" who was captured in Europe near a large river (possibly the Elbe) after being lost from his unit" during World War II. The American, who spoke Russian "fairly well" and was conversant in German, was "reportedly tried at Moscow and Karaganda by a military court on charges of espionage and received a 15-year sentence."

The second Japanese informant, repatriated on April 22, 1950, reported having been held in the same room for three days with an American prisoner at the Karabas convict camp southwest of Karaganda about August 22, 1948.<sup>16</sup> The second American, whose physical description differed considerably from the first, was said to have been captured somewhere in Germany and sentenced by the Soviets to 25 years in prison on espionage charges. The second American, who spoke German and Russian, was "reportedly ill treated by other prison inmates who blamed the United States for their predicament, was transferred to special quarters in the same camp in late August 1948."<sup>17</sup>

The Tokyo G-2 officer recommended to Heidelberg that since "other repatriates from the same areas will be contacted as soon as possible on this special target . . . it is recommended that the European Command be queried on this subject and/or any pertinent data be for-

<sup>14</sup>From Baden Baden #BB-021, to CINCEUR (Secret), October 2, 1950. See also memo from USPOLAD Heidelberg #85, to State (Secret), Subject: Harry Lepselter, October 25, 1950, 611.61241/10-2550.

<sup>15</sup>From USPOLAD Heidelberg #100, to State (Secret), November 14, 1950, 611.61241/11-1450.

<sup>16</sup>Heidelberg #100 to State, November 14, 1950.

<sup>17</sup>Heidelberg #100 to State, November 14, 1950.

warded . . . ." Heidelberg reported that a "European source" had given information that one American "is interned in one of the camps in Karaganda (49°52'N-73°10'E) Kazakh SSR." The source based his statements on the following circumstances.

One day in October 1949, after he had returned from work, one of his fellow PWs in the barrack told him of an incident he witnessed that day. On his way to work with his group, he was passing the vicinity of the airstrip when he saw Soviet militia and MVD soldiers start beating a man who had been walking in that area. The man cried out that he would not stand for that sort of treatment and that he was an American citizen. They then beat him and mistreated him all the more and called him a spy. A car of the MVD police arrived upon the scene, and the man was dragged into it and presumably taken to MVD headquarters. The source of this information said he never saw the man again.<sup>18</sup>

In August 1951, a returning German prisoner of war provided information to U.S. authorities in Stuttgart about "two American citizen prisoners of war in Russia [so] that their whereabouts be made known to their relatives in the United States."<sup>19</sup> The two Americans were identified as

Jimmy Rodefeldter (or Rodhefelder), from Cincinnati, Ohio (or New Orleans), 38 years old, physician and officer in the United States Air Force and John Baaker (or Prager), Cincinnati, about 35 years old, painter, and soldier in the United States Air Force. They were taken prisoner some time in 1944. They are reportedly in Stalingrad in the International Brigade (Camp 7362/3).

One year later, the American Consul in Berlin reported to Washington that a German citizen, a former prisoner of war held in Russia, said "during his stay in the camp Karabas in the district of Karaganda in October and November 1947" he met "an American who was an inmate of the camp and spoke to him."

His first name was *Henry* and his surname began with the letter "P." He was then twenty-nine years of age and was 5'8" tall. He spoke

<sup>18</sup>Heidelberg #100 to State, November 14, 1950.

<sup>19</sup>From Amconsul Stuttgart, to State (Unclassified), August 13, 1951.

broken German. Three nearly destroyed chevrons were recognizable on his uniform. He was called 'sergeant' by the Soviets. Toward the end of November 1947, [the source] again saw Henry P. at a camp in Dsheskasgan (48°N, 67°E) situated about 140 miles southwest of Karaganda (50°N, 73°E). There he lost sight of Henry P. but recalls seeing his cap once lying on the ground in the camp.<sup>20</sup>

The Missing Persons' Bureau of the German Red Cross in Hamburg (Abteilung II, Zivilvermisste) reported to the American Consul General that another German citizen reported information concerning two Americans held by Soviet forces. The source said that "on February 8, 1947 at 07:30 a.m. a transport was sent from the Concentration Camp Buchenwald in the Soviet Occupied Zone to Camp 7099/20 in Karaganda. This transport consisted of about 1000 German civilians and 2 U.S. soldiers."<sup>21</sup>

The American Consul General in Bremen, after two invitations, was able to interview the German repatriate at length concerning the identity of the two alleged Americans:

[The source] is unable to name the soldiers, although he is quite sure that the family name of one began with the letter "T." He believes the last name of the first to be something like "Slint" (short "i"), of the second something like "Tundor" (short "u"). "S" was described as being about 5'9" (1 meter, 75 centimeters), thin, blond, very nervous; "T" as 5'7" (1.70), heavier, dark-haired, quiet. As [the source] remembers them, they were both about 20 years old or younger, both dressed in khakis, both privates, both speaking some German.

According to [the source], when he first came to Buchenwald in January 1946, "S" was already there. "T" allegedly arrived in May or June of that year. Both are supposed to have been picked up by the

<sup>20</sup>From Amconsul Berlin #237, to State (Unclassified), June 19, 1952, Subject: Welfare-Whereabouts: Alleged U.S. Soldier Imprisoned in the USSR, 611.61241/6-1952.

<sup>21</sup>From Amcongen Hamburg, to Amcongen Bremen (Unclassified), July 9, 1952, Subject: Welfare-Whereabouts: Information Regarding Death in Russian Prison Camp in 1947 of Alleged American Soldiers.



Soviets while visiting girlfriends in the Soviet Zone whose acquaintance they had made while stationed in that area before it was turned over to the Soviets. Both are alleged to have been accused of espionage, placed in a camp with civilians who had been interned by the Soviets, among them [the source].

In February 1947, [according to the source], about 100 able-bodied prisoners, including himself, "S" and "T," were removed to Karaganda. In the summer of 1948, "S" is alleged to have attempted, unsuccessfully, to escape. [The source] further stated that at the time he left Karaganda, in December 1948, both "S" and "T" were still there.

[The source] expressed his regrets at being unable to furnish additional details, stated that he believed he could identify the soldiers positively if shown photographs of them, offered to cooperate with the appropriate authorities in so far as he was able.<sup>22</sup>

In November 1952, the Secretary of State forwarded all of this information concerning two American soldiers held in Soviet custody to the Secretary of Defense.<sup>23</sup>

#### A repatriated Finnish prisoner

asserted to local interrogators that at Kresty Prison in May 1953 he met an American from San Francisco. An English-speaking Finnish prisoner told this man the American had said he had arrived in Finland from Sweden, had sojourned in Tampere and had received a three year sentence for crossing the border at Imatra. This is compatible with what is known here of movements of Leland Towers.<sup>24</sup>

Austrians who were repatriated on October 14, 1953—there were 633 altogether, many held since the end of World War II—were quoted by the United Press as saying two Americans, H. H. Cox and Leland

<sup>22</sup>From Amconggen Bremen, to State (Confidential), September 26, 1952, Subject: Incarceration in a Soviet Prison Camp of Two Alleged American Soldiers, 611.61241/9-2652.

<sup>23</sup>Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Confidential), November 26, 1952, 611.61241/9-2652.

<sup>24</sup>From Helsinki #8404, to State (Confidential), October 23, 1953, 611.61251/10-2353.

Towers, were imprisoned in a Soviet camp northeast of Moscow.<sup>25</sup> Other Austrians "said they heard that a third American, believed to be from Missouri, was held in a prison camp in the Ural mountains." Former POWs from the Netherlands provided detailed information about Homer Cox and Leland Towers. This information included their home addresses, date and circumstances of their capture, and specific details about things such as Cox's "tattoo marks of a snake on his right arm and a girl with a western hat on his left."<sup>26</sup>

The movements of Cox and Towers and information about their contact with Soviet officials were also provided by the Dutch sources. The Office of the Air Attaché in the Hague reported that a former Dutch prisoner said "he came in contact with two U.S. citizens held as prisoners named Homer Cox and Leland Towers at a POW Repatriation Staging Camp at Volga Lag at Shcherbakov from June 1953 to October 1953." Another Dutch repatriate stated that "the two subject Americans arrived at Shcherbakov from Vorkuta." A third Dutch returnee noted that in July 1953 he "lived in a barracks with two Americans. He could give information only on one of the two." Twelve other Dutch repatriates identified Cox and Towers in similar terms.<sup>27</sup>

This was the type of specific information U.S. officials needed to make effective presentations and protests in Moscow. In October 1953, the Department of State prepared an aide-mémoire for delivery to the Soviet Foreign Ministry that began, "The US Government has received verified information from a number of different sources that several American citizens are being held prisoners within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." The aide-mémoire gave specific information about "Pvt. Homer H. Cox (sometimes called Jim and Harold) of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 33 years old, military service number 19303498, who was arrested on or about September 6, 1949, in the Soviet sector of Berlin while on duty with the US 759th Military

<sup>25</sup>UP despatch by Franz Cyrus, October 14, 1953, dateline Wiener Neustadt, Austria.

<sup>26</sup>From The Hague #374, to State (Confidential Security Information), October 27, 1953, 611.61241/10-2753.

<sup>27</sup>From The Hague #447, to State (Confidential Security Information), Date missing, but apparently sent October or November 1953.

Police Service Battalion."<sup>28</sup> Equally detailed information was submitted concerning Leland Towers. The draft of the aide-mémoire went on to outline the serious concern of the U.S. Government over the detention of American citizens.<sup>29</sup>

On November 2, 1953, American Ambassador to the Soviet Union Charles Bohlen "delivered personally today an aide-mémoire concerning Cox, Towers, and others to Sobolev, head of the American section" of the Soviet Foreign Ministry.<sup>30</sup> Bohlen reported:

I told him I was taking up this matter personally because of the great importance my government attached to this question since we had definite information that these men were being held in the Soviet Union. Sobolev said the names were unknown to him but promised to look into the matter and let me know. In leaving I again expressed the strong hope that the Soviet Government would take prompt action in this matter. As previously stated, we are strongly of the opinion that the aide-memoire should not be published until the Soviets have replied or until sufficient time has elapsed to indicate that they do not plan to answer.<sup>31</sup>

The following is a verbatim copy of the memorandum that Ambassador Bohlen delivered to the Soviet Foreign Ministry:

#### AIDE-MEMOIRE

The United States Government has received verified information from a number of different sources that several American citizens are being held prisoner within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Private Homer H. Cox (sometimes called Jim or Harold) of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 33 years old, Military Service number 19303498, was arrested on or about September 6, 1949, in the Soviet Sector of Berlin while on duty with the U.S. 759th Military Police

<sup>28</sup>From Moscow #533, to State (Confidential Security Information), October 30, 1953, 611.61251/103053.

<sup>29</sup>From Moscow #518, to State (Confidential), October 26, 1953, 611.61251-10-2653.

<sup>30</sup>From Moscow #540, to State (Confidential Security Information), November 2, 1953, 611.61251/11-253.

<sup>31</sup>Moscow #540, November 2, 1953.

Service Battalion, stationed in that city. Mr. Cox has been seen by different observers at various prison camps in the USSR and is known to have been held in the very recent past at a Soviet prison camp near Shcherbakov (Rybinsk) Yaroslavl Province. The camp is believed to be named Sverdlov, No. 6118, or "International Prison Camp."

Mr. Leland Towers of San Francisco, California, 29 years old, was arrested on or about October 5, 1951 at the Finnish-Soviet border. Mr. Towers is the bearer of American passport number 185803, issued April 7, 1948, and renewed at Göteborg, Sweden, on April 3, 1950. Mr. Towers has also been seen in various prisons in the USSR and was held in the very near past at the same prison camp described in the preceding paragraph. Other informants indicate that Mr. Towers was sentenced to three years in prison by the Soviet authorities on the allegation that he illegally crossed the Finnish-Soviet border at Imatra.

Additional information suggests that several other American citizens are imprisoned in the USSR. The most specific reports concern a Colonel Cerny, a First Lieutenant Cushman who is a chaplain, and a Mr. Clifford Brown, all of whom were seen at a Soviet prison camp at Vorkuta, Komi ASSR.

The United States Government takes a most serious view of the Soviet Government's imprisonment of these American citizens without notification whatsoever to American authorities. Basic humanitarian principles, as well as long-recognized norms of international law, required the Soviet Government to inform the United States Embassy at Moscow immediately upon the arrest of these American citizens. Moreover, by the exchange of letters between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim M. Litvinov on November 16, 1933, the Soviet Government undertook a specific obligation to notify the American Government as soon as possible of the arrest or detention of any American citizens in the USSR and to arrange for a visit to the arrested citizen by American representatives.

The United States Government requests the Soviet Government immediately to investigate the situation of American citizens being held prisoner in the USSR and to supply the American Embassy in the very near future with the full facts of the matter, including specifically in each case the date and place of arrest, the legal charge against the prisoner, the date and term of the sentence, and

the present whereabouts and welfare of the American citizen concerned. The United States Government also expects that the Soviet Government will in the very near future arrange for visits to the imprisoned Americans by representatives of the Embassy in accordance with the obligations undertaken by the Soviet Government in cases of this type.<sup>32</sup>

The DoS did not conceal this information or these efforts from the public, but many Americans were not convinced that the United States Government was doing enough—or anything at all—to secure the release of detained U.S. servicemen.

The father of an American GI captured by the Germans wrote to Secretary of State Dulles in November 1953. "I have before me," he wrote:

an article from the *Los Angeles Examiner* dated (Moscow November 19th) stating,—Russian and Japanese Red Cross delegations today agreed on the repatriation of 1274 Japanese soldiers and civilians held in Soviet prison camps since World War II. . . . My blood boils at the sight of Truman's name or picture let alone his talks. I feel he is responsible for our American men being in slave labor in prison camps in Russia.

I know everything has to be worked on the quiet but why can't we get the Red Cross delegations or the Salvation Army delegation to help get several thousand of our American World War II men out of those slave labor camps North East of Moscow? People I write to in Germany claim they know where they are.<sup>33</sup>

Senator H. Alexander Smith of New Jersey received a letter from a constituent referring to a United Press story from Berlin that quoted "seven Norwegians released by the Soviets after eight days of imprisonment" as saying "the Russians are holding scores of other Western prisoners including an American major." The constituent wrote the following:

<sup>32</sup>From Moscow #164, to State (Confidential Security Information), November 17, 1953, 611.61251/11-1753.

<sup>33</sup>Letter to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, November 20, 1953, 611.61241/2053.

When I first read this article I got so damned mad I felt like putting my fist right through the wall. —the arrogance of it all. Those Russians have the unmitigated gall to sit in the United Nations and talk peace while they hold some of our American boys in prison. And what are we going to do about this matter? What are you going to do about it, Senator? I would certainly like to think you are going to make some sort of move to get this man free.

If I were a Senator I wouldn't leave a stone unturned until I had that man home again. I wouldn't be able to sleep at night just thinking of him out there in some Russian hell-hole. I'm sure he has prayed to God many times for help. Wouldn't it do your heart good to know that you were instrumental in bringing him back home? . . . Please, in the name of freedom, try to bring this poor, forgotten fellow back home, and may God bless your efforts.<sup>34</sup>

Senator Smith referred the letter to the Legislative Liaison Office of the Department of the Army for a reply.<sup>35</sup> Following standard practice, the Department of the Army referred the letter to the Department of State "inasmuch as contacts of this type with the Russians must be handled through the State Department."<sup>36</sup>

The day following Ambassador Bohlen's delivery of the aide-mémoire, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was asked at a press conference "what information he had on Messrs. Leland Towers and Homer H. Cox, reported by repatriated Austrian prisoners of war to be in a Soviet prison camp." The Secretary replied, "We have gathered together whatever information we could get with reference to Americans reported to be in Russian prison camps. We have asked Ambassador Bohlen to take their cases up with the Soviet Government. He did that personally yesterday, requesting their release, and we are awaiting a reply on that."<sup>37</sup> Dulles instructed Bohlen later in the month to "follow-up, in manner you deem best, Cox-Towers case

<sup>34</sup>Letter to the Honorable Alexander Smith, October 26, 1953.

<sup>35</sup>Letter from Senator H. Alexander Smith to Lt. Colonel John Lockett, November 3, 1953, 611.61241/11-453.

<sup>36</sup>Letter from Lt. Colonel Carl A. Petersen, Liaison Division, to The Honorable H. Alexander Smith, November 4, 1953.

<sup>37</sup>Department of State for the Press, "Americans in Soviet Prison Camps," November 3, 1953, No. 610.

which is subject of continuing inquiries" in Washington.<sup>38</sup> Bohlen replied, "In a letter dated November 25 to Sobolev, chief of the American section in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, I reiterated our urgent request for information concerning Cox and Towers. If no reply is received by December 2, I will communicate with the Department concerning possible further handling of the case."<sup>39</sup> On December 1, the DoS was advised that Homer Cox had been "dropped from [U.S. Army] rolls as a deserter on December 5, 1949. He had previously been convicted as 'drunk in command' and punished. His file contains official correspondence regarding unpaid debts. A report dated May 7, 1953 states Cox had been observed in Bautzen (Soviet Zone) by military personnel who later returned from Soviet Zone to U.S. control. There is no record at this headquarters or Berlin concerning any action taken with the Soviets to verify the presence of Cox in the East Zone."<sup>40</sup>

On December 3, the American Embassy at Moscow notified the DoS "since a month has now elapsed without a reply since our original protest to the Soviet Government against the detention of Cox, Towers, and others, we feel the next step would be to make an approach to Gromyko."<sup>41</sup> On December 14, Mrs. Irene Towers wrote to the DoS:

Will our American Ambassador, Mr. Bohlen, approach the Soviet Government again in behalf of my son and other American prisoners? I hope he will soon approach the Soviet Government again on this subject. I trust hope has not been abandoned for these prisoners.

Would you suggest that I bring my son's case before the General Assembly of the United Nations? If, so, to whom should it be directed?<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup>From State #33, to Moscow (Confidential Security Information), November 24, 1953, 611.61251/11-2453.

<sup>39</sup>From Moscow #626, to State (Confidential Security Information), November 28, 1953, 611.61251/11-2853.

<sup>40</sup>From Heidelberg #1, to State (Confidential Security Information), December 1, 1953, 611.61251/12-153.

<sup>41</sup>From Moscow #649, to State (Confidential Security Information), December 3, 1953, 611.61251/12-353.

<sup>42</sup>Letter from Mrs. Irene Towers to Mr. Barbour, December 14, 1953, 611.6125/12-1453.

On December 21, Mrs. Towers was informed by letter that "you should now have received my letters to you of December 11 and December 14, informing you that a second approach to the Soviet Government has been made by Ambassador Bohlen and that further representations will be made in the near future if no satisfactory response is received from the Soviet Government."<sup>43</sup> Ambassador Bohlen reported to the DoS on December 21, "I took advantage of my visit to Molotov today to raise question of Cox, Towers, and others. Molotov said he was not familiar with details, but could tell me that in case of Cox and Towers the decision was favorable and they would be freed. We will follow up with Foreign Office in order to obtain details of time and place of release, as well as information on other individuals raised with Sobolev on November 2."<sup>44</sup> The DoS promptly advised the "families of Cox and Towers (Embassy Telegram 748)<sup>45</sup> re Molotov's statement for their confidential information.<sup>46</sup> Unless the Embassy perceives an objection, the Department spokesman will inform the press stating only that Molotov has said Cox and Towers will be freed but no details are available."<sup>47</sup>

The American Embassy at Moscow remained cautious. An Embassy officer "called on the head of the American section [at the Soviet Foreign Ministry] today to inquire about developments in the case of Cox and Towers. Sobolev replied that he knew no more about the case than what Molotov told the Ambassador on Monday. He assured O'Shaughnessy, however, that the minute he had any further news he would let us know." In the same message, Bohlen cautioned the DoS on premature publicity of the release. The Department, he

<sup>43</sup>Letter from Walworth Barbour, Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs, to Mrs. Irene Towers, December 21, 1953, 611.61251/12-1453.

<sup>44</sup>From Moscow #748, to State (Confidential), December 21, 1953, 611.61251/12-2153.

<sup>45</sup>611.61251/12-2153.

<sup>46</sup>Telegram from Walworth Barbour, Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State, to Irene Towers, December 22, 1953, 611.61251/12-2253, sent at 4:05 pm. "Ambassador Bohlen has received assurance from Soviet Government your son, Leland Towers, will be released. I shall inform you immediately when we have further details on time and place release. Since our negotiations with Soviet Government this matter are not (repeat not) yet complete, above information should be held in strictest confidence for time being and should not be disclosed to press."

<sup>47</sup>From State #390, to Moscow (Confidential), December 22, 1953, 611.61251/12-2153.



wrote, "will recall in the case of Austrian and Dutch prisoner, for reasons which are still obscure, several months elapsed between Molotov's oral promise and the actual release of prisoners. In these circumstances I believe it wiser to refrain from official statements until further details are received from the Foreign Office. If as a result of informing families, as would be normal, questions are asked by the press, the reply might simply state that the U.S. Government has reason to believe that these men will be eventually released."<sup>48</sup>

The families of the detained Americans did not have to wait several months after Molotov's promise that they would be released was made. Homer Cox and Leland Towers were released at 2:00 p.m. on December 29 at Berlin-Karlshorst. Cox was "taken into Army custody on AWOL charges" while Towers was placed in the U.S. Army Hospital in Berlin "for medical examination and intelligence interrogation."<sup>49</sup> Towers requested that the "Department notify his mother" of his release.<sup>50</sup> The Soviet Foreign Ministry delivered the following note to the American Embassy at Moscow on December 29, 1953:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs USSR presents its compliments to the Embassy USA and, referring to the Embassy's aide-mémoire of January 2, 1953, has the honor to state that according to information received by the Ministry, H. Cox and L. Towers were handed over to representatives of the American authorities in Berlin on December 29, 1953.<sup>51</sup>

Mrs. Towers wrote to Walworth Barbour on January 4, 1954 to express her "congratulations to the Department of State for a job well done, most efficiently, and very quickly."<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup>From Moscow #756, to State (Secret), December 23, 1953, 611.61251/12-2353.

<sup>49</sup>From Berlin #697, to State (Confidential), December 31, 1953, 611.61251/12-3153.

<sup>50</sup>From Berlin #690, to State (Unclassified), December 29, 1953, 611.61251/12-2953. A telegram was sent to Mrs. Towers at 6:03 p.m. on December 29, 1953 by Walworth Barbour, Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs. "Please inform you that your son Leland was released to American custody by Soviet authorities in Berlin today. Health appeared satisfactory."

<sup>51</sup>From Moscow #782, to State (Confidential), December 30, 1953, 611.61251/12-3053.

<sup>52</sup>Letter from Irene Towers to Mr. Barbour, January 4, 1954, 611.61251/1-454.

After Cox and Towers were released, the DoS turned its attention immediately to the issue of how to obtain additional information about other Americans in Soviet prisons as well as how to obtain their release. There was also the issue of how to handle future protests in a way that would not jeopardize the prospects for the release of other prisoners. On December 30, the DoS advised officials in Berlin that the Department "assumed Towers and Cox are being interrogated regarding their knowledge of any other Americans in Soviet prisons. Do they have information on any of the following: Colonel Cerny, Lt. Cushman and Clifford Brown (civilian), all reportedly held in camp at Vorkuta, Komi ASSR; Master Sergeant Kimith (phonetic) and Valeshook (phonetic), both reportedly held at Vladimir camp?"<sup>53</sup> The next day Secretary Dulles sent the following instructions to the American Embassy in Moscow.

Department agrees that it is preferable to withhold protest until hope of obtaining the release of other Americans is exhausted. While the Embassy may take publicity line at its discretion with correspondents there, doubt if much is to be added from Moscow end beyond acknowledgment that the Embassy has received the Soviet note confirming the release. Press reports indicate Cox and Towers have information on other Americans in Soviet prisons. In answering press queries, Department plans to say it is making a full investigation with a view to further representations to the Soviet Government. Do you see any objection to our informing the press of the names of Cerny, Cushman, and Brown as included in our original approaches?<sup>54</sup>

The American Embassy responded that it would be better to hold off "publicity on Cerny, Cushman, and Brown at least until information that Cox and Towers may have on them has been obtained and examined and after further representations to the Soviet Government."<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup>From State #398, to Hicog Berlin (Confidential), December 30, 1953, 611.61251/12-2953.

<sup>54</sup>From State #423, to Moscow (Confidential), December 31, 1953, 611.61251/12-3053.

<sup>55</sup>From Moscow #800, to State (Confidential), January 1, 1954, 611.61251/1-154.

In January 1954, the American Embassy in Bonn reported to Washington, "Air Force Intelligence, which is continuing interrogation of returning POWs, suggests photographs of missing Americans in USSR could be shown to returnees, who sometimes report meeting Americans in camps but cannot remember names. Photos needed soonest."<sup>56</sup> An important factor before a protest was made by the American Embassy continued to be proof that a particular prisoner was indeed an American citizen. The American Embassy noted, "We believe it wiser in approaching the Soviet Government on cases of this type to have all possible details on hand and to have no (repeat no) doubt regarding an individual's claim to American citizenship." The Embassy continued:

In this connection the Department has never informed us whether it has been able to obtain confirmation of the existence and citizenship of Colonel Cerny, Lieutenant Cushman, and Clifford Brown. Do military authorities have any record of the first two?

Since we might want to include new and stronger representations regarding John Noble in our next note to the Soviet Government regarding imprisoned Americans, we hope the Department will be able to give us early confirmation regarding Noble's American citizenship requested in Embassy's despatches 158, November 14 and 212, December 30.<sup>57</sup>

Cox identified two American soldiers, Bill Marchuk and William Verdine, and three other U.S. citizens in Soviet prisons. The U.S. Army confirmed that "Private William T. Marchuk, 37, Breckenridge, Pennsylvania . . . absent from duty station Berlin since February 1, 1949, and Private William A. Verdine, 27, Starks, Louisiana . . . absent from duty station Coburg, Germany since February 3, 1949."<sup>58</sup> Neither the Department of State nor the Department of Defense was able, however, to document Cerny, Cushman, Brown, Kumith, or Valeshook. The DoS advised the Embassy that since "John Noble has

<sup>56</sup>From Bonn #2197, to State (Confidential), January 11, 1954, 611.61251/1-1154.

<sup>57</sup>From Moscow #805, to State (Confidential), January 4, 1954, 611.61251/1-454.

<sup>58</sup>Draft of memo from State #461, to Moscow (Secret), January 12, 1954, 611.61251/1-454.

a valid claim to American citizenship [he] may be included in your presentations."<sup>59</sup>

The DoS asked that the interrogation of Cox be expedited so that an "approach to the Soviets can be made soonest." On January 14, a report from Berlin indicated that though the interrogation of Cox was incomplete, he was able to provide the following data on Americans in Soviet prisons:

Re Marchuk. Cox met him late September 1952 at Camp 4, Vorkuta; he had been there 2 years. Cox described him as speaking fluent Ukrainian and as associating with Ukrainian not English speaking prisoners. Cox did not see him after his departure from Vorkuta in mid-June 1953. He was then in good health and working as a surface laborer in the Vorkuta coal mines.

Re Verdine. Cox last saw him in Vorkuta Camp No. 4 in June 1953. His prison number there was 1-Z-667. He had tuberculosis and Cox thinks he will not survive another winter. Verdine was held in Weimar from the time of his arrest until 1952 then was moved to Lichtenberg prison Berlin. They were separated after their arrival but in November 1952 Verdine was put in the same camp with Cox.

Verdine told Cox a US citizen, Guy Kerrick Jr., testified against him at his trial in Germany. Kerrick, AWOL from 7742 Engineers, US Army since January 23, 1949, is understood to be at Bautzen.

Re Noble. Cox did not see him but heard of him through a Canadian, Roy Linder whom Cox did not trust. They were brought together for four days prior to Cox's departure from Vorkuta.

Re Cerny. Verdine told Cox he was in prison with Cerny at Weimar from February 1949 to July 1952. Verdine said Cerny was from Brooklyn, New York and was musically talented. Cox lacked information showing Cerny to be in Russia.

Re Hural. Hural is his actual name although he used the name Hural'sky in Russia. Cox describes him as about 52 years old, height 5 feet 6 inches; weight 140 lbs. (He is probably 40 to 50 lbs under normal weight as a result of imprisonment.) His father's name is

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<sup>59</sup>State #461, January 12, 1954.

not known but was described as a dental technician in Beverly Hills, California. Cox said Hural claimed US citizenship by birth in US of Russian parents. Hural told Cox he came to Russia 10 years before the outbreak of the war and was employed as a translator by Soviet publishers in Moscow. He was arrested when he applied for a visa to return to the US in 1946. Cox saw him first on arrival at the headquarters of Camp Vorkuta, then on Cox's return to this camp for four days processing prior to departure for Sherbakoff. He was in good health but appeared to have aged considerably during the interval. Cox thought he had an easy job.

Re Green. Cox described him as 5 feet 10 inches, weight 130 lbs (see remarks on Hural's weight), age about 37, wears glasses habitually. Home was Hollywood, California, father Leon B. Green. Green thinks his father might be dead. His father was a consulting engineer in the Hollywood area. Green said that he had numerous cousins on his father's side named Malloy which is prominent in the engineering field; that he was born in Russia; that the family moved to Canada when he was young, then to Hollywood; that he and his sister were naturalized before a Los Angeles court. Both went to Russia before World War II; that he worked in Moscow for Henry Cassady of UP or AP; that at the outbreak of the war he started work for General Faymonville (chief of Lend-Lease mission to Russia until 1944). His sister, Green told Cox, had been a language instructor at the school attached to the American Embassy Moscow. In 1946 when they applied for exit visas, both were arrested and placed in Siberian labor camps. Later Green was sent to Vorkuta working first as a ventilation engineer then maintaining miners' lamps. He had not heard of his sister for a year prior to Cox's departure from Vorkuta in June 1953. Green had been in several Siberian camps but had met no Americans prior to Vorkuta.

Cox had also heard from Austrian PWs at Shcherbakov that there were six Americans in various camps east of the Urals who appeared to be in good health. He did not learn their names.<sup>60</sup>

Cox had no information on Cushman, Brown, Kumith, or Valeshook. An Italian soldier repatriated from Russia reported that two Americans, "H. Cake from New York, a military policeman kidnapped in

<sup>60</sup>From Berlin #757, to State (Secret), January 14, 1954, 611.61251/1-1454.

Vienna in 1949" and an unnamed "military policeman kidnapped in Berlin in 1950" were "currently interned in the transit prisoner's camp at Shcherbakov." The Italian also identified "Canadian Air Force Lt. Colonel Linder who was taken prisoner in Berlin in 1949 and was last seen by the contact in late 1953" at the Vorkuta camp.<sup>61</sup>

Secretary Dulles instructed the American Embassy in Moscow in mid-January 1954, "If you now have sufficient information re Americans held in Soviet prisons, I suggest representations be made to the Soviet Foreign Ministry soonest."<sup>62</sup> The Embassy responded that "the final decision as to what cases are included must be made by the Department as only point which has the available necessary information regarding whereabouts and citizenship. . . . We still consider, as set forth in greater detail in Embassy telegram 533 to Department . . . that it is preferable to make separate representations regarding cases of Americans imprisoned in USSR and those in Soviet occupation zones Germany and Austria. We have contemplated that our approach to the Soviet Government would include only the former. The Department's instructions on this point are requested."<sup>63</sup>

The DoS responded on January 27 to the Embassy's January 21 suggestion for a procedure to lodge another protest with the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The Embassy was given authority to make a

strong representation on verified cases followed by those whose American citizenship is not verified. . . . Include cases Noble, Marchuk, Verdine, and Hural about whom the Embassy possesses all pertinent information known to the Department. . . . Include following cases: George Green and sister Leah (Touby is mother's name); Kumith; Eisenhower; Clifford Brown with alternate spellings Charles Brown Clifford and Clifford Charles Brown (Italian POW reported American citizen engineer "Clifford" in Moscow Prison Lefortskaya in January 1948); Otto Gechli-Cerny (Czerny, Channy); Chaplain Lt. Cushman (Robert Coshman or Kochman—reported as working with Czerny at coal mine No. 6 Verkuta; Miller (Mueller von Seidlitz) Vienna despatch 867, December 11, contains details.

<sup>61</sup>From Genoa #95, to State (Confidential), January 19, 1954, 611.61241/1-1954.

<sup>62</sup>From State #486, to Moscow (Secret), January 19, 1954, 611.61251/1-1454.

<sup>63</sup>From Moscow #913, to State (Confidential), January 25, 1954, 611.61251/1-2554.

The DoS suggested that the name Valeshook be omitted at the Embassy's discretion and one name, Winter, be omitted because "at the present time not imprisoned in USSR."<sup>64</sup>

The DoS suggested changes in the wording of the U.S. note that were noted on February 2. The Embassy reported that it had "made an exhaustive attempt to correlate disjointed and fragmentary bits of information from many sources regarding individuals the Department wishes included in our approach. From this correlated data we have chosen for presentation to the Soviets those 'facts' which: (A) Are most probably true; (B) will be most useful to Soviet authorities in identifying persons concerned; and (C) will be most likely to convince the Soviet Government we are sure of our ground." The Embassy pointed out that there were limits to its ability to check facts:

However, we have felt from the start that a proper job of correlating and checking information regarding imprisoned Americans could be done only by the Department, which has access to such sources as military records, home town archives, correspondence with relatives, air force interrogation reports mentioned in the Stefan letters to Stoessel, i.e., this Embassy's pre-1950 consular files, and the Department's own passport and visa files. Therefore, we think it preferable to obtain the Department's specific approval of wording [concerning the case of William T. Marchuk].<sup>65</sup>

The DoS accepted this wording. The Embassy was reluctant to include George and Leah Green in the note since it appeared "from here they are at best dual nationals. Both were born in Russia" and the Embassy's files showed that there was once a file on George Green's visa application. "If they are dual nationals," the Embassy concluded, "including them in our approach might jeopardize its success in obtaining the release of those American citizens whom the Soviet Government cannot reasonably claim as its own citizens. As the Department knows, the Soviets have long been absolutely unyielding in maintaining the principle of superior rights of residence state over dual nationals. If the Department does wish to include dual nationals, it would seem desirable to include any other persons

<sup>64</sup>From State #497, to Moscow (Confidential), January 27, 1954, 611.61251/1-2154.

<sup>65</sup>From Moscow #944, to State (Confidential), February 2, 1954, 611.61251/2-154.

of this category whom Department and Embassy files show to be imprisoned in the USSR."<sup>66</sup> The Embassy closed this telegram with a final note. Telegrams from the American Embassy at Tokyo

raise a strong possibility that the USSR is holding some survivors of crews of various American planes shot down near Soviet borders during recent years. Since the release of such men would give a clue to the public and categorical statements of the Soviet Government, it seems unlikely the latter would release them at this time. Certainly these cases should not be mixed up with our present representations, but, especially if more exact information becomes available, it would seem desirable to give careful thought as to what might be done.<sup>67</sup>

The DoS followed this advice. On February 3, 1954 the Soviet government responded to an American request for information that had been delivered to the Soviet Foreign Ministry nine months earlier. The note, which responds to an inquiry regarding the whereabouts of Technical Sergeant Lawrence Edward Reitz, reads as follows:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America, and with reference to the Embassy's Note No. 885 of May 29, 1953, has the honor to state that the Ministry had taken necessary measures to determine the whereabouts of Lawrence Edward REITZ, which, however, have been without avail.<sup>68</sup>

The Department of State subsequently notified Mrs. Ida M. Reitz Stichnoth, mother of T/Sgt. Reitz, and at least two Members of Congress of the Soviet note's content. The DoS notified the American Embassy that it should "make representations soonest on verified cases Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble only. You will be informed regarding action to be taken on other cases."<sup>69</sup>

On February 5, the American Embassy delivered a second note to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the cases of William T.

<sup>66</sup>Moscow #944, February 2, 1954.

<sup>67</sup>Moscow #944, February 2, 1954.

<sup>68</sup>From Moscow #489, to State (Unclassified), February 3, 1954, 611.61241/2-354.

<sup>69</sup>From State #511, to Moscow (Confidential), February 3, 1954, 611.61251/2-154.



**Marchuk, William A. Verdine, and John Hellmuth Noble.** The note, sent to DoS under the rubric, "Americans Imprisoned in the USSR," follows.

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and has the honor to refer to the aide-mémoire left by Ambassador Bohlen with Mr. Sobolev on November 2, regarding American citizens imprisoned in the USSR.

Although American citizens Cox and Towers have been returned to the American authorities at Berlin, the Soviet Government has not, so far as the Embassy is aware, taken any action with regard to the other American citizens whom it holds. In addition to the other persons mentioned in the aide-mémoire under reference, the Embassy now has verified information that the Soviet Government has imprisoned the following American citizens:

1. William T. Marchuk (Marchenko) of Breckenridge, Pennsylvania, is a private in the United States Armed Forces. His Service Number is RA6949875. He was arrested in the Soviet sector of Berlin on or about February 1, 1949, and has been a prisoner in a penal camp near Vorkuta, Komi ASSR, for at least two years. Various reports have given the name of the prison camp as "Camp Four" and as "MGB Civilian Penal Camp No. 222/R." He was seen at this place as recently as June 1953, by several different observers.
2. William A. Verdine of Starks, Louisiana, is a private in the United States Armed Forces. His Service Number is RA3859686. He was arrested in Germany on or about February 3, 1949, and was held in a prison at Weimar, Germany. He was moved to Lichtenberg Prison, Berlin, in 1952, and later in the same year brought to the USSR, where he has been a prisoner in a penal camp near Vorkuta, Komi ASSR. He was seen at "Camp Four," Vorkuta, as recently as June 1953. His prison number is 1-2-667.
3. John Hellmuth Noble formed the subject of the Embassy's notes No. 200 of August 29, 1953, No. 446 of November 14, 1953, and No. 567 of December 30, 1953. Definite confirmation has now been received that he has been held prisoner by Soviet authorities in a penal camp near Vorkuta, Komi ASSR. His most recent address was given in Embassy note No. 446.

The United States Government views the imprisonment or detention of American citizens by the Soviet Government as an extremely serious matter.

The Embassy requests that the Ministry make immediate investigation of these cases and supply the Embassy with full details regarding them.<sup>70</sup>

The Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, Elim O'Shaughnessy, informed Acting Foreign Minister Zorin, "I had been instructed to present this note personally to him in order to emphasize the importance which my government attached to these cases and read him the text of the note. He replied that he could only tell me that he would endeavor to verify the allegations it contained and would let me know the results."<sup>71</sup> Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., Acting Officer in Charge of USSR Affairs, wrote to Charles Noble on February 10, to inform him of O'Shaughnessy's actions on behalf of his son, John Noble. Stoessel wrote that Charles Noble "may be assured that we shall do everything possible in behalf of your son and that any information of interest to you will be communicated promptly."<sup>72</sup> Stoessel wrote a similar letter to Mrs. Sophia Marchuk<sup>73</sup> and to Mrs. Fannie Verdine.<sup>74</sup> The Department of State also informed two Members of Congress, T. Ashton Thompson and Overton Brooks, that the case of William Verdine had been raised by the American Embassy with the Soviet Foreign Ministry.<sup>75</sup>

On February 4, Congressman Arthur Klein wrote to the DoS to obtain information about Jack Hural, who the Congressman understood

<sup>70</sup>From Moscow #270, to State (Confidential), February 5, 1954, 611.61251/2-554.

<sup>71</sup>From Moscow #964, to State (Confidential), February 5, 1954, 611.61251/2-554.

<sup>72</sup>Letter to Charles A. Noble from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., February 10, 1954, 611.61251/2-1054.

<sup>73</sup>Letter to Mrs. Sophia Marchuk from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., February 10, 1954, 611.61251/2-1054.

<sup>74</sup>Letter to Mrs. Fannie Verdine from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., February 10, 1954, 611.61251/2-1054.

<sup>75</sup>Letter to the Honorable T. Ashton Thompson from Thruston B. Morton, February 10, 1954, 611.61251/2-1054, and letter to the Honorable Overton Brooks from Thruston B. Morton, February 10, 1954, 611.61251/2-1054.

"went to the Soviet Union voluntarily in 1934 or 1935 and that since the end of the war no word from or about him has reached his family. . . . I turn to you for any information you may be able to give me regarding the actions being taken by the Department to effect the release of this young man and the other Americans still imprisoned. I should also like to know what can be done to obtain information regarding his present physical condition or what can be done to obtain some word from the young man himself which might be conveyed to his family."<sup>76</sup> Assistant Secretary Thruston B. Morton replied that "upon receiving the report that Private Cox and Mr. Towers had reported seeing in a Soviet prison an American citizen named Jack Hural, the Department made an immediate investigation." Morton continued:

The records of the Department of State disclose that a United States passport was issued on June 14, 1934 to Jacob Geralsky, also known as Jack Hural, for travel to the Soviet Union for the purpose of visiting relatives for two years. . . . The affidavit of Alexander Hural, Jacob Geralsky's father, contains a statement to the effect that his son had renounced allegiance to the United States. Mrs. Geralsky called at the Embassy in the spring of 1946 and informed the Officer in Charge of the Consular Section that she and her husband were also applying for Soviet exit visas in order that they might leave the Soviet Union.

In view of the above information, it appears that Mr. Jacob Geralsky (Jack Hural) lost his American citizenship. However, the Department is continuing its efforts to establish his status with a view to taking such action on his behalf as may be appropriate.<sup>77</sup>

Information on alleged Americans reported seen in Soviet prisons was shared by the British as well.

The following information has been received by the HQ from HQ British Intelligence Organization WAHMERHEIDE, British Army of the Rhine 19. It concerns the possible detention of five alleged

<sup>76</sup>Letter to the Office of Special Consular Services from Congressman Arthur G. Klein, February 4, 1954, 611.61251/2-454.

<sup>77</sup>Letter from Thruston B. Morton to the Honorable Arthur G. Klein, February 19, 1925, 611.61251/2-454.

American citizens in the USSR none of whose names appear in the Department's telegram to Moscow 497 or Moscow's telegram to Department 944:

1. Source, Augustin SPRIEKER, a German returnee from the USSR, who appears to be quite intelligent and alert; cooperative and made a favorable impression. Report quoted—"In May 1950, while in custody (Untersuchungshaft) in the prison in HALLE known as "Zuchthaus Rote Och[?]e," source discovered that the next cell contained two alleged Americans with whom he communicated by means of tapping on the wall, using the "numerical code," i.e. one tap for letter 'a' and so on up to twenty-six taps for letter 'z'. He remembered the following details which his neighbors spelled out to him: M. Clause Moore, 95 [Ker . . . Street], NEWARK, Delaware — Captain Andres [??], no other details obtained. Source further gathered by the same means that they had been arrested while visiting a girl or girls in MAGDEBURG, date of arrest or other details of their previous history not known. [Unreadable] these two men, and could, therefore, give no descriptions. After two or three days, the Russian guard personnel became aware of Source's tapping activities, and he was removed from the cell." (BAOR Ref "BITG/32-2/3 (C)")

2. Source, Dr. Anton PETZP:D, a German civilian returnee from the USSR who appeared to be intelligent and cooperative. Report concerns a Major William THOMPSON (U. S. AIR FORCE). Report quoted "THOMPSON told source that after a forced landing in 1944 he was arrested by the Russians and subsequently sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment for alleged espionage. From 1944 to 1948 he had been incarcerated in the BUDENSKAYA prison in Moscow and had then been transferred to TAYSHET Camp (Compound 026). The only other information source could give concerning THOMPSON was that he once mentioned that his home had been in San Antonio, Texas. Description: Age about 38, height 1.85 meters, slim build, thin features, fair hair, blue eyes." (BAOR Ref: "BITG/32-2/3(A)")<sup>78</sup>

The problem of American citizens in Soviet captivity was a concern of Members of Congress and the general public alike.

<sup>78</sup>From Political Adviser, HQ US Army, Europe, Heidelberg #45, to DoS (Confidential), February 18, 1954, 611.61251/2-1854.

On February 20, 1954, Congressman Eugene D. Millikin wrote to the Secretary of State inquiring whether "10,000 Americans" were being held as prisoners behind the Iron Curtain.<sup>79</sup> Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton responded in the following way:

The overwhelming majority of the individuals in Eastern Europe who might have claims to American citizenship are dual nationals whose claims to American citizenship are in many cases not recognized by the governments of the countries in which they are now residing. For the most part these persons are (a) naturalized Americans who returned to the country of their birth, (b) children born in the USSR or other Iron Curtain countries of naturalized American parents, who derive a claim to American citizenship from the citizenship of their parents, or (c) children born in the United States of alien parents, who left the United States as minors. The bulk of the persons in these categories returned after World War I and during the depression years to the countries of their parents' origin, some without United States passports, some with United States passports which have long since expired, and others on the foreign passports of alien parents. In these circumstances the governments of the countries to which such persons returned have contended that they are not citizens of the United States but citizens of the former countries. It should also be pointed out that it is not correct in any sense to infer that large numbers of these individuals are being held in prison.

Although some persons who are clearly American citizens have been arrested, and imprisoned or detained by Communist authorities in the USSR and in Soviet-dominated countries of Eastern Europe in clear violation of every precept of law and justice, the Department has been successful in most cases in obtaining the release of these American citizens through diplomatic representations and other measures. These cases include among others, the following:

Hungary  
Robert A. Vogeler  
Israel Jacobson of the Joint Distribution Cmte.

Czechoslovakia  
William N. Oatis

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<sup>79</sup>Letter from Congressman Eugene D. Millikin to the Honorable John Foster Dulles, February 20, 1954, 611.61251/2-2054.

George H. Jones | —American soldiers  
Clarence R. Hill |  
Lieutenant Luther G. Roland—American pilot  
Stanley E. Abbot | —Mormon missionaries  
C. Aldon Johnson |  
Vlasta Vraz —representative of the American Relief for  
Czechoslovakia  
John Hvasta  
  
The Soviet Union  
Homer H. Cox  
Leland Towers

... Your constituents may be assured that the Department does not overlook any request for assistance coming from American citizens or any reports that American citizens abroad are in difficulties of any kind. In each case it makes a careful investigation in order to determine what action can and should be taken.<sup>80</sup>

Mr. Thomas Marchuk, who described himself as "a sick worried father" wrote to the DoS to find out if any information had been received about his son. The DoS responded on March 29 that even though more than one month had passed since the note concerning Marchuk had been delivered to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, "this does not necessarily indicate that the reply will be negative since it is customary for a considerable length of time to elapse before the Soviet Government makes a reply to notes of this character."<sup>81</sup> On March 3, 1954, Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations Thruston Morton wrote to Senator Leverett Saltonstall regarding a letter Saltonstall received from a constituent who was concerned that "American civilians and military personnel . . . may be in Communist custody."<sup>82</sup> Morton outlined U.S. government policy on this issue in his response to Saltonstall's inquiry and included the list of released American citizens noted in his letter to Senator Millikin.

<sup>80</sup>Letter from Thruston B. Morton to Senator Eugene D. Millikin, March 11, 1954, 611.61251/2-2054.

<sup>81</sup>Letter from Thomas Marchuk to the DoS (undated), 611.61251/3-954, and letter from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., Acting Officer in Charge, USSR Affairs, March 29, 1954, 611.61251/3-9-54.

<sup>82</sup>Letter from Thruston B. Morton to Senator Leverett Saltonstall, March 3, 1954, 611.61241/2-1954.

The DoS informed the American Embassy at Moscow that "relatives and press inquiring regarding results of February 5 representation concerning Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble. In your discretion make followup representation."<sup>83</sup> Ambassador Bohlen responded that the "original representation on Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble cases followed up by first person note to Worin, dated March 16. If no (repeat no) answer is received by April 6, I shall take the matter up again."<sup>84</sup>

Information obtained from repatriated Austrian and German citizens continued to be collected and assessed by U.S. officials. On April 2, 1954, the DoS was notified that a man who said he had been imprisoned by communists in Dresden in 1946 said "he met several U.S. Air Force officers who were also imprisoned there." The American Consulate reported "we assume that the capture of these officers, if it ever actually occurred, has long since been clarified, we are sending on [this report] in the event it might be of some interest or value." The source made this report because he promised one of the Americans that he would "give this information to American authorities upon his discharge and he wanted to keep his promise."<sup>85</sup>

On April 8, Ambassador Bohlen advised the DoS, "I have today sent a first person note to Molotov again urging promptest consideration of the case of imprisoned Americans."<sup>86</sup> Bohlen wrote:

I have the honor to draw your attention to the fact that the American Chargé d'Affaires called on Mr. Zorin on February 5 and handed to him the Embassy's note No. 600 regarding three American citizens who are imprisoned in the U.S.S.R. On March 16 I sent a further communication to Mr. Zorin on this subject.

More than two months have now elapsed without any reply from the Ministry. As has already been emphasized, the United States Government takes a very serious view of the imprisonment of these American citizens and wishes to clarify immediately the full details of their arrest and present situation. In addition, the families of the

<sup>83</sup>From State #603, to Moscow (Confidential), March 29, 1954, 611.61251/2-554.

<sup>84</sup>From Moscow #603, to State (Confidential), March 30, 1954, 611.61251/3-3054.

<sup>85</sup>From HICOG Bonn #2650, to State (Unclassified), April 2, 1954, Subject: U.S. Airmen Imprisoned in East Zone in 1946, 611.61241/4-254.

<sup>86</sup>From Moscow #1213, to State (Confidential), April 8, 1954, 611.61251/4-854.

men are quite understandably anxious about their welfare and have made repeated inquiries, which my Government is not able to answer satisfactorily without information that only the Soviet Government can supply.

I therefore urge that the Ministry give its most urgent attention to this question and inform the Embassy at the earliest possible moment regarding its status.<sup>87</sup>

On April 12, Senator James H. Duff wrote to the DoS on behalf of a constituent who wanted information about Private William Marchuk.<sup>88</sup>

On April 28, 1954, the American Embassy in Vienna advised the DoS that Austrians had identified and described two Americans held in the USSR.

Colonel Paul CERNY. Held up and arrested for attempted espionage in 1948 or 1949, while crossing the Semmering, Lower Austria. CERNY, then a man of about 52, claimed to have been a colonel serving with USAF. According to one source, who speaks some English, CERNY's English as well as his German sounded rather poor. The alleged US Army officer claimed to be of Yugoslav descent and resident of Chicago, USA. Another Yugoslav captive who on one occasion talked to CERNY in his allegedly native tongue, told source later on that neither Croatian nor Serbian could have been his mother tongue. Whatever language CERNY spoke, however, he did so with a strong but indeterminable Slav accent.

Source met him the first time in 1950 in Mine 6 of the Vorkuta coal mines and both captives frequently talked to each other. CERNY told source that he possessed a factory in the 10th district and a big flat in the 20th district of Vienna. Furthermore he claimed that it was he who had organized US espionage in postwar Berlin, after he had done so previously in Japan while serving with the US Forces there. Even more dubious were his allegations that it was he who knew where the Lindbergh baby had been hidden, as well as the

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<sup>87</sup>Text of Note No. 853 attached to memo from Moscow #417, to State (Confidential), May 14, 1954, 611.61251/5-1454.

<sup>88</sup>Memorandum from Senator James H. Duff to the Department of State, April 12, 1954, 611.61251/4-1254, and letter from Thruston B. Morton to Senator James H. Duff, April 20, 1954, 611.61251/1254.



story that he had played a leading role in rounding up John Dillinger, America's "Public Enemy #1," in the early thirties. On one occasion, source could not help asking CERNY why he told such highly incredible stories, whereupon CERNY replied: "Just for the hell of it."

Contrary to what most of his fellow inmates took him for, namely a liar, source believed him to be honest and considered his political attitude reliable. CERNY frequently told source that he was very much afraid of one of the other inmates, a Robert KOSHMAN.

**Robert KOSHMAN.** Son of a Viennese Jew and a Ukrainian mother, KOSHMAN claimed to have been born in Los Angeles, USA, his approximate age being, according to source's estimate, 35. He states that prior to his seizure he had been a Catholic US Nav. Chaplain and a "Stars and Stripes" Special Correspondent. While in the USSR he was in touch with his aunt who still lived in the Ukraine from where she occasionally supplied him with food parcels and English literature. KOSHMAN, who had studied in Shanghai, was fluent in English, spoke several Chinese dialects, almost perfect Russian and some German. Another priest, who also served his term in Vorkuta, frequently discussed theological matters with him and confirmed that KOSHMAN's theological background appeared to be beyond doubt. Source first met KOSHMAN in 1950 in Mine 6 of the Vorkuta coal mines. Upon source's question why he had been deported, KOSHMAN explained that some ecclesiastical organization in Moscow had invited him in his capacity as a clergyman and special correspondent to come to the Soviet Union and visit what the Soviet authorities referred to as churches. KOSHMAN, therefore, traveled to the Soviet Union. In the course of his research into religious affairs he quite accidentally, as it then seemed, met a very good-looking Russian girl. Just as natural seemed a following short romance. However, this ended when KOSHMAN married the girl who turned out to be a MVD 1st Lieutenant, her object being not matrimony but his conviction as a spy. The price KOSHMAN finally paid for this Red-pattern romance was deportation for alleged espionage. At least that was his version. His fellow inmates, however, unanimously agreed that he was a phony, serving his rulers as a stool pigeon, in the hope of earning his return ticket. The only actual evidence his fellow prisoners had

were the slips he occasionally made, thereby revealing that he apparently must have had clandestine contact with the management of the camp.

KOSHMAN's hobby was medicine and he spent most of his spare time reading medical literature. Since source, one-time medical student, served in the camp as a doctor, KOSHMAN frequently called on him to talk shop and eventually asked him to translate some medical books into English. Source did him a favor. One day, however, he was called in to 1st Lieutenant PAVLITSHENKO, head of the camp dispensary, who on several occasions had displayed an amiable attitude towards him. Without further comment PAVLITSHENKO demanded that source not only immediately cease his translation work for KOSHMAN but also restrict his contact with the latter to essential requirements. Shortly after this ominous incident in the fall of 1951, KOSHMAN, according to hearsay, was moved to another unknown camp.

SOYKO, (fnu). Although in his appearance rather nondescript, even insignificant, this unusual, sinister individual had an outstanding personality. SOYKO was very introvert and reticent, and puzzled his fellow inmates by his enigmatic behavior. It is for this reason that source's information on this man is very sketchy. SOYKO is stout, dark-haired and stern-faced, aged approximately 30. These are about the only physical characteristics source was able to furnish. As for his educational background, SOYKO could discuss practically any topic with much authority. He spoke fluently and without any flaws any language, including its respective dialects, in which the inmates could test him. Among these was Russian, Caucasian, French, English, Italian, and some German. An allegedly well-traveled man who pretended to be familiar with every part of the world, he had been arrested for an unknown reason in some unknown port city. Although SOYKO shrewdly evaded any questioning regarding his own affairs, he always tried to sound out the others. Source, shortly after his arrival asked SOYKO where he had learned English, SOYKO replied laconically: "I am an American." Source and the other captives were convinced that SOYKO had adopted his cosmopolitan manner as a means to double-cross his fellow inmates. (It will be recalled that a Henry Menon-SOYKA was the subject of HICOG, Bonn, Despatch No. 2740, April 13, 1954.)

Another Austrian returnee states that in Verkhni-Uralsk in 1953 he saw an American soldier named Mory FINGEDGE, who had been arrested on a zonal border (location unknown) and sentenced by the Soviets to twenty-five years imprisonment.<sup>89</sup>

Members of Congress made frequent inquiries on behalf of constituents asking for information obtained as a result of U.S. government efforts.

On April 30, 1954, Congressman T. Ashton Thompson wrote to Assistant Secretary Morton asking for "an up-to-date report" on Private William A. Verdine who Congressman Thompson described as "a prisoner of the Russians."<sup>90</sup> In Morton's response to the Congressman, dated May 6, the Assistant Secretary noted:

since no reply had been received to the Embassy's note of February 5, 1954 concerning Private Verdine and two other American citizens reported to be imprisoned in the Soviet Union, Ambassador Bohlen on March 16 and April 8 sent strong follow-up notes to the Soviet Foreign Office urging prompt consideration of these cases. No reply has been received to these latest representations.

The fact that no reply has been received from the Soviet Government concerning these cases does not necessarily indicate that the reply will be negative, since it is customary for a considerable length of time to elapse before the Soviet Government makes a reply to notes of this character.

The Department and our Ambassador at Moscow realize how vital this matter is to the families of these men and will do everything possible to obtain their release. I shall communicate to you immediately any information which might be received regarding them.<sup>91</sup>

Ambassador Bohlen notified the DoS on May 10, "Since we have still had no answer regarding Americans imprisoned in USSR (Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble) I propose to call on Acting Foreign Minister

<sup>89</sup>From Vienna #1561, to State (Confidential), April 28, 1954, 611.61251/4-2854.

<sup>90</sup>Letter from Congressman T. A. Thompson to Thruston B. Morton, April 30, 1954, 611.61251/4-3054.

<sup>91</sup>Letter from Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton to Congressman T. Ashton Thompson, May 6, 1954, 611.61251/4-3054.

Zorin May 11 and again urge Soviet reply be expedited."<sup>92</sup> On May 14, the American Embassy in Moscow sent the DoS copies of three American démarches under the subject of "Americans Imprisoned in the USSR: Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble."<sup>93</sup>

On May 11 (and again on June 11) the Soviet government "injected the case of the Soviet defector [Yuri Rastvorov] . . . into our undertakings to obtain the release from Soviet imprisonment of William A. Verdine, William T. Marchuk, and John Hellmuth Noble." Assistant Secretary of State Thruston Morton noted further:

It was apparent that further representations on behalf of these Americans would bring additional inquiries regarding Rastvorov. It was therefore decided to withhold action on our part until the Soviet Government was informed of the decision in the Rastvorov case.<sup>94</sup>

The Soviet Embassy in Washington was not informed by the U.S. government that Rastvorov had decided to stay in the United States until August 13, 1954. For the next three months the American Embassy at Moscow was required to diminish the pace of its representations on behalf of Americans imprisoned in the USSR to avoid any linkage to the Rostvorov case.

Ambassador Bohlen expressed concern that since Zorin had made an inquiry about Rostvorov "following my further representations of the case of three Americans it would seem to indicate that the Soviet Government is attempting to link the two subjects. We should, therefore, anticipate in the future they may attempt to offer the release of these three Americans in return for Rostvorov."<sup>95</sup> The American Embassy did not want to lose the momentum of U.S. protests over Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble but the Ambassador was reluctant to proceed in light of the fact that "if I took up the question with him either orally or in writing, Zorin would undoubtedly come

<sup>92</sup>From Moscow #1390, to State (Confidential), May 10, 1954, 611.61251/5-1054.

<sup>93</sup>#417, 611.61251/5-1454.

<sup>94</sup>Memorandum by James, EE (Confidential), September 2, 1954, FW611.61251/7-2754.

<sup>95</sup>From Moscow #1401, to State (Confidential), May 12, 1954, 611.61251/1254.

back with the question of Rostvorov again." The Ambassador requested the Department's instructions on how to proceed.<sup>96</sup> Three days later the DoS notified Bohlen that "representations regarding Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble should continue to be pressed." The Department instructed the Embassy that "if Zorin raises Rastvorov case again in connection with the three imprisoned Americans, the Embassy should strongly protest this unjustified attempt by the Soviets to link Rastvorov with three Americans who have been held for years in the USSR and whose cases have no connection whatsoever with Rastvorov."<sup>97</sup>

On June 11, the U.S. High Commissioner in Berlin notified the DoS that the German Red Cross had passed along information from two released German POWs concerning two Americans reported to be held in the Soviet Union. The first "source states he had seen Feingers (civilian internee) during the time from 1952 to the summer of 1953 in Camp No. 5110/50 at Wechni Uralsk. Source also stated that Feingers, who had been with the U.S. Army, had been arrested by the Russians in Prague and had been sentenced to 25 years imprisonment for espionage." The second "source states that he had seen Hopkins [first name unknown] on October 15, 1948 in Brest. . . Hopkins is an American officer, about 34 years old."<sup>98</sup> Later that month, the British Intelligence Office at Goettingen, Germany passed along another report by a repatriated prisoner:

Source of information . . . a German national, who, in January and February 1953 was transferred, together with other prisoners, from Berlin to Vorkuta, USSR, in a train consisting of closed wagons. Every evening the prisoners were detained in the prison of whatever town they arrived at. On or about February 1953, while waiting in the courtyard of the prison at a place called RASAIFKA, about 200 km east of MOSCOW, Source made the acquaintance of a foreigner, who asked her if she were German, but before the conversation could proceed very far, the stranger was marched off. She met him again the next morning on the railway station while waiting for the prison transport and he told her that he was an American citizen,

<sup>96</sup>From Moscow #1512, to State (Confidential), June 1, 1954, 611.61251/6-154.

<sup>97</sup>From State #768, to Moscow (Confidential), June 4, 1954, 611.61251/6-454.

<sup>98</sup>From HICOG Berlin #939, to State (Official Use Only), June 11, 1954, 611.61251/6-1154.

and that his name was HARRY HOPKINS. He was a Major, and in 1945, after the capitulation, he had been in charge of the airfield at Berlin-Templehof. He had been arrested in Berlin by the Russians, but did not say in which Sector, on what date, or under what circumstances, and in 1946 had been sentenced by a Russian military court to ten years forced labour for espionage. According to HOPKINS he had been sent to work as a doctor in a women's forced labor camp (Source did not know where), had escaped from the camp, and made his way to Moscow where he had reported to the US Embassy. The latter had assisted him to open a practice in Moscow under an assumed name, but he had in due course been discovered, and at the end of 1952 had again been sentenced this time to 25 years forced labor. HOPKINS was taken off the train at GORKI a day or two later, and Source did not see him again.<sup>99</sup>

The German Red Cross passed along information from a second returnee concerning another alleged American:

During Source's internment in a Russian forced labor camp known as "Nagornaya" about 60 kms from Solikamsk, there arrived in February, 1952 another female internee who told Source she was an American citizen and that her name was Eva MELTZ (German phonetic spelling—actual spelling not known). During the course of the following months, Source saw and spoke to her many times, and gathered that she herself was American born and her home was in New York, but her husband, although born in the USA, was of Russian parentage. Both Mr. and Mrs. MELTZ had gone to Russia in or about 1939, and not long after their arrival the husband and another male relative (Source assumed it was the husband's father) were arrested, and the husband sentenced to ten years forced labor for an unknown offense. At the end of the ten years he failed to return, and in the course of her endeavors to obtain more information about her husband's fate, Mrs. MELTZ was herself arrested and sentenced to ten years forced labor for anti-Soviet propaganda.<sup>100</sup>

The Embassy continued to press the case of those whose U.S. citizenship was not in question. The Rostvorov case continued to complicate the process of delivering protests.

<sup>99</sup>From Political Adviser, Headquarters, US Army Europe, Heidelberg #83, to State (Confidential), June 29, 1954, 611.61251/6-2954.

<sup>100</sup>Heidelberg #83, June 29, 1954.

On July 3, the American Embassy reported that three weeks had passed since the Ambassador's June 8 letter concerning Noble, Marchuk, and Verdine had been delivered to Zorin. "Normally," the Ambassador wrote,

the Embassy would send a strong follow-up to the Ministry, but I feel we will get little satisfaction and might even force a totally negative reply as long as the status of Rastvorov is not (repeat not) clarified. There can obviously be no (repeat no) question of any deal or bargaining between these matters, but I believe that the vagueness in regard to Rastvorov will provide the Soviets with a continuing basis for hope that the United States is considering the possibility of a deal. . . . Quite apart from the three Americans immediately concerned, I believe to leave the implication that we have kidnapped or are holding by force, a Soviet citizen is a very serious matter.

The Ambassador closed by asking for the Department's guidance on how to proceed on behalf of the three Americans.<sup>101</sup> On July 20, Senator Homer Ferguson wrote to the DoS on behalf of a constituent who wanted to know what was being done to secure the release of "John Noble who is in a Russian Concentration camp."<sup>102</sup> Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton responded one week later that the Department of State, beginning on February 18, 1946, made "numerous representations to the Soviet Government which were made with a view to obtaining" the release of John Noble and his father, Charles A. Noble. After 1952, when Charles Noble was released, "these representations were continued for his son." Morton noted that representations had been made in Moscow on August 29, November 12, and December 20, 1953 on John Noble's behalf and on February 5, March 16, April 8, May 11, and June 8, 1954, on behalf of Noble, Marchuk, and Verdine. "Up to the present time," Morton wrote, "the Soviet Government has made no reply to our request that these men be released from prison and returned to the jurisdiction of the United States authorities."<sup>103</sup>

<sup>101</sup>From Moscow #13, to State (Confidential), July 3, 1954, 611.61251/7-354.

<sup>102</sup>Letter to Thruston B. Morton from Senator Homer Ferguson, July 20, 1954, 611.61251/7-2054.

<sup>103</sup>Letter to Senator Homer Ferguson from Thruston B. Morton, July 28, 1954, 611.61251/7-2054.

On July 23, the Department of State forwarded to Senator Charles E. Potter, in response to a request for information concerning United States citizens in the USSR and its East European satellites, a memorandum entitled, "US Citizens in the USSR and Its European Satellites." Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton noted that this memorandum "represents the Department's latest information regarding this subject." Most of the people living behind the Iron Curtain who claimed American citizenship were naturalized citizens who had returned to their country of origin, children born abroad to naturalized American parents, and children born in the United States who were taken abroad as minors by parents who were not American citizens.

In the majority of these cases claims to American citizenship are not recognized by the governments of the countries in which the claimants currently reside. . . . The governments of the countries in which they reside contend that they are not citizens of the United States but rather citizens of the countries in which they have lived and worked for many years and where they raised their families. This Government, of course, does not recognize this contention and continues to assert the American citizenship of such persons when such citizenship has been established in accordance with our laws.<sup>104</sup>

Morton cautioned, "this matter defies definitive determinations because our missions in Eastern Europe are not permitted to carry on normal consular activity. The figures expressed herein may, however, be considered as basic working figures in the absence of better information."<sup>105</sup> Attached to this memorandum was a secret annex containing the names of "American citizens known or believed to be incarcerated in Eastern Europe at the present time."<sup>106</sup>

The Department of State pointed out that "Eastern European governments have prevented claimants to US citizenship from contact-

<sup>104</sup>"U.S. Citizens in the USSR and Its Eastern European Satellites," p. 2. See Table 3.2 above.

<sup>105</sup>Letter to Senator Charles E. Potter from Thruston B. Morton, July 23, 1954, 611.61251/7-2354.

<sup>106</sup>Letter to Senator Charles E. Potter from Thruston B. Morton (Secret), July 23, 1954, 611.61251/7-2354.



ing US missions, they have denied American consular officers access to claimants to US citizenship, they have not been cooperative in reporting vital statistics, departures from the country" and in general made it difficult for U.S. officials to put together an accurate picture.<sup>107</sup> The DoS estimated, for example, that "the number of potential claimants in Poland has been estimated at several thousand in addition to those already verified, and in the USSR at approximately 2,000."<sup>108</sup> The DoS created six classifications: (1) individuals who have established claims to United States citizenship; (2) non-dual national American citizens excluding official personnel; (3) verified American citizens who have been permitted to depart; (4) American citizens who have informed U.S. missions that they are unable to depart because of the failure of the communist government to grant exit documentation; (5) Americans who when last heard from were in labor camps, prisons, or concentration camps; and (6) individuals who have disappeared under circumstances that would indicate they are incarcerated. Two "U.S. citizen government employees have defected. They are Annabel Hucar, an Administrative Assistant in the Embassy at Moscow who defected just prior to the time she was to return home and Sergeant James McMillan, a member of the staff of the Military Attaché at Embassy Moscow. Very few dual nationals are or have been employed by our missions abroad; none has defected."<sup>109</sup> Table 3.5 below reproduces the table attached to this unclassified memorandum.

The classified annex to the memorandum to Senator Potter contained names of specific cases. Morton explained that this information was included in "a classified annex as it is our belief that everything practicable is being done to free these unfortunate people and uncontrolled publicity concerning their plight might place them in further jeopardy." The classified annex reads as follows:

USSR

William T. Marchuk

US Army Service Number RA 694 9875

<sup>107</sup>"U.S. Citizens in the USSR and Its Eastern European Satellites," p. 1.

<sup>108</sup>"U.S. Citizens in the USSR and Its Eastern European Satellites," p. 1.

<sup>109</sup>"U.S. Citizens in the USSR and Its Eastern European Satellites," pp. 2-3.

**Born April 5, 1916 Maynard, Massachusetts**

**Reenlisted in Regular Army September 1, 1948 for three years after having completed five years, 10 months and ten days prior service.**

**Reported AWOL February 1, 1949 in Berlin**

**Permanent address: [deleted]**

**Representations to the Soviet Government on behalf of Mr. Marchuk and the two men listed immediately below were made on February 5, 1954, March 16, 1954, April 8, 1954, May 11, 1954, and June 8, 1954. No reply has been received to any of these communications.**

**William A. Verdine**

**US Army Service Number RA 38593686**

**Born June 3, 1926, Starks, Louisiana**

**Honorably discharged February 14, 1946 to enlist in Regular Army. Reenlisted February 15, 1946 at Seoul, Korea. Honorably discharged June 25, 1947. Granted terminal leave and recommended for further military training. Reenlisted August 21, 1947 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, extended his enlistment three years. Reported AWOL February 3, 1949 in Europe.**

**John Hellmuth Noble**

**Born September 4, 1923 at Detroit, Michigan**

**Taken to Germany by parents in 1938.**

**Arrested by Soviet authorities with his father at Dresden, Germany, July 5, 1945. Father released and with rest of family returned to US.**

**Family now resides at [deleted]**

**Noble has been the subject of previous representations by the Embassy.**

**Mieczyslaw Cieslak**

**Born November 25, 1910 at Salem, Massachusetts. Applied for an American passport at Moscow in March 1941, presenting a Polish**

identity card for Foreigners No. 203/39 Serial No. 00287, issued on May 15, 1939 by the office of the mayor of the Polish city Lida. On the basis of this Polish documentation as a foreigner Cieslak had been issued Soviet Residence Permit for Stateless Persons No. 026439 on October 15, 1940 by the Bureau of Visas and Registration of Baranovichskaya Oblast. He was arrested by the German Army on September 25, 1941 and was in German captivity until the retreat of the Germans from Minsk in 1944.

Cieslak had reopened correspondence with the Embassy at Moscow prior to his arrest on June 27, 1945 at Lida, Grodno Oblast. According to his wife, he was sentenced to prison in the Soviet Union to serve until 1950 and was held in L.K.Ch.No. 274/118, Koshvinski Raion, Komi-Peryatski Nationalni Okrug.

The Embassy sent five notes from April 1, 1946 to July 30, 1949 before receiving the Soviet Government's reply on August 6, 1948 that Cieslak was Polish and a Soviet citizen. Six subsequent notes remained unanswered although the Embassy gave the exact date on Cieslak's Polish and Soviet documentation as a foreigner. His name was included in Category 4 of our Aide-Mémoire of December 12, 1949. The reply of the Soviet Government of February 28, 1950 made no reference to him but asserted our statement that 32 American citizens have been kept in prison by Soviet authorities "belongs to the number of malicious lies."

Cieslak's name was included in our last note of March 5, 1954 with the request that the Embassy be permitted to interview him, and the other thirty-seven persons listed, either at their residence or at the Embassy. No reply has been received to this note.

#### **Zofia Kazanska (Kazanaska)**

Born April 20, 1913 at Hamramck, Michigan. Mother was born in Poland in 1887. Lived at Krzywczycz, Poland 1920-1945. The Polish authorities informed the American Embassy at Warsaw on September 17, 1947 that "it has not been disclosed that Zofia Kazanska during her residence in Poland possessed any other citizenship than that of the United States."

Zofia Kazanska was arrested in Lwow by the Soviet NKVD on February 3, 1945 and deported, first to Krasnodon and then to Dnepropetrovsk.

The Embassy made two representations on behalf of Zofia Kazanska, March 1, 1947 and March 29, 1948 and received two replies from the Soviet Government stating she was a Polish national and a Soviet citizen. She was included in Category 4 of our Aide-Mémoire of December 12, 1949 as an arrested person. The Soviet reply of February 28, 1950 stated that "Sophie" Kazanska's Soviet citizenship had been established.

Zofia Kazanska was included in our last note to the Soviet Government of March 16, 1954 with the request that the Embassy be permitted to interview her and the other thirty-seven persons listed either at their residence or at the Embassy. No reply has been received to this note.

#### **Joseph, Pauline, and Aldona Marshall**

Joseph Marshall was born on September 28, 1897 at Utica, New York. His father was born in Lithuania, came to the US in 1880, naturalized in 1897 and lived in the US until his death in 1927.

Joseph Marshall went to Lithuania as an employee of the Lithuanian Sales Corporation, later (1929) American Lithuanian Stock Company, an American firm with its principal office in Boston, Mass. He was issued five American passports during the years 1921 to March 9, 1939.

Pauline Marshall acquired American citizenship through marriage to Joseph Marshall on August 8, 1921. According to Section II, Article 9 of the Lithuanian Constitution of May 15, 1928, Mrs. Marshall ceased to be a Lithuanian citizen following her marriage. She was included in the American passports of Joseph Marshall since October 11, 1923.

Aldona Marshall was born on April 27, 1922 to American parents, thus acquiring American citizenship. She was included in all American passports of her father from October 11, 1923 on.

The Marshall family was arrested and deported to the Soviet Union at the end of 1945 or the beginning of 1946.

Eight notes were sent to the Soviet Government before a reply was received on April 13, 1949 claiming the Marshalls to be Lithuanian by nationality and citizens of the USSR.

The Marshall family was included in our aide-mémoire of December 12, 1949 under Category 4 as arrested persons. The Soviet reply

of February 28, 1950 stated that the Soviet citizenship of the Marshall family had been established.

The Marshall family was included in our last note to the Soviet Government of March 6, 1954 with the request that the Embassy be permitted to interview either at their residence or at the Embassy this family and the remaining thirty-five other persons.

**Ida Sophie Muller**

Born Homestead, Pennsylvania September 27, 1920. Arrested by Soviet authorities in Rumania and deported to the Soviet Union along with her sister Maria Sara Muller. Maria Sara Muller reported as having returned to Rumania but the Department has received no information indicating that Ida Sophie Muller has returned.

Ida Sophie Muller was included in our aide-mémoire of December 12, 1949 under Category 4 as an arrested person.

Also included in our last note to the Soviet Government of March 6, 1954 with the request that the Embassy be permitted to interview her either at her residence or at the Embassy.

**Dora Gershonowitz (Dual National)**

Born in Patterson, New Jersey April 13, 1922, and taken to the USSR by her parents in 1933. Became a Soviet citizen through the retroactive interpretation of a Soviet nationality decree to the effect that a minor child becomes a Soviet citizen through the naturalization of the parents. Employed by the American Embassy a number of years until arrested for non-payment of Soviet taxes March 1950. On May 5, 1950 she was sentenced to four years 'corrective labor.'

Notes addressed to the Soviet Government by the American Embassy Moscow on October 15, 1953 and January 11, 1954 inquiring as to her whereabouts and welfare have been unsuccessful other than a statement included in a Soviet note of December 26, 1953 to the effect that she is a Soviet citizen.

**E. Irene Matusis (Dual National)**

Born New York City July 21, 1914. Went to the USSR July 19, 1926. Soviet authorities state she was given a Soviet passport upon obtaining her majority. Applied for American passport November 26,

1943, which was issued January 3, 1946. Applied for renunciation of Soviet citizenship on December 6, 1946.

Employee Consulate General Vladivostok five years. Arrested May 20, 1947, charged with speculation. Convicted by Soviet Court October 24, 1947; sentenced to a probable three to five years in a labor camp.

Consulate Vladivostok permitted to send Matusis packages soon after her arrest but nothing has been heard of her since conviction.

**Alexander Dolgun (Dual National)**

Employed by American Embassy Moscow for a number of years. Arrested by Soviet authorities December 13, 1948 after repeated unsuccessful Soviet representations to US Embassy demanding that Dolgun be evicted from Embassy premises.

Reported by recently released POWs of foreign nationality as seen in Soviet prison camps. He has been the subject of several representations to the Soviet Government, the latest being dated July 20, 1954.

**POLAND**

None.

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

**Jaromir Zastera**

An American citizen through birth in Czechoslovakia of an American father. He has never been outside Czechoslovakia and is serving an 18-year sentence for alleged anti-state activity. We have had consular access to this man and efforts are continuing on his behalf.

**RUMANIA**

None.

**HUNGARY**

**Mrs. Klara Horvath Kisa (Dual National)**

She was arrested with her husband, a Hungarian national, in 1951. She was born in Hungary in 1918 and came to the United States in 1931. She became a US citizen through her father's naturalization but returned to Hungary in 1932. She first asserted a claim to US citizenship in 1941. From 1941 until the time of her arrest she was employed by International Business Machines, Inc. The Department has been requested by her brother, an American citizen, to refrain from activity on her behalf at the present time. He feels that until further notice our intervention might bring about a worsening of her present situation.<sup>110</sup>

The classified annex to the memorandum concluded with a list of six Americans who had either been released or had not been in contact with American authorities for some time. Investigation into these cases proceeded nonetheless. No figures were given for Bulgaria or Albania because the United States had no diplomatic relations with these countries. The United States suspended relations with Bulgaria on February 20, 1950, and the United States did not recognize the Albanian government after World War II. The DoS did not believe that any Americans were being held in either of these countries.

The American Embassy at Moscow reminded the Department of State on July 26 that "we are risking loss of momentum and cumulative impact built up in the Noble-Marchuk-Verdine cases. We should appreciate appropriate instructions."<sup>111</sup> Congressman Alvin M. Bentley wrote to the Secretary of State on August 2 requesting information on what was being done to secure the release of John Noble.<sup>112</sup> Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton responded one week later in a letter that outlined the circumstances under which John Noble was imprisoned, the dates protest notes were sent to the Soviet Foreign Ministry on his behalf, and noted that "the Depart-

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<sup>110</sup>Letter from Potter to Morton, July 23, 1954.

<sup>111</sup>From Moscow #131, to State (Confidential), July 26, 1954, 611.61251/7-2654.

<sup>112</sup>Letter to the Honorable John Foster Dulles from Congressman Alvin M. Bentley, August 2, 1954 611.61251/8-254.

**Table 3.5**  
**U.S. Citizens in the USSR or Its Satellites in Eastern Europe (1954)**

	USSR	Poland	Czech	Rumania	Hungary
Approximate number of verified American citizens resident in country (including dual nationals)	704	3,000	291	377	394
Approximate number of verified American citizens resident in country (excluding dual nationals)	45	10	118	39	11
Approximate number of documented American citizens (including dual nationals) whom we know to have attempted to depart but could not because of denial of exit documentation	113	577	45	116	100
Number of verified American citizens known to be incarcerated at present time	2	0	1	0	1
Number of verified American citizens who have disappeared under circumstances indicating that they are presently incarcerated.	0	1	2	3	0

ment and our Embassy at Moscow are well aware of the situation . . . and efforts to obtain [his] release from Soviet imprisonment will be continued."<sup>113</sup>

The DoS renewed its instructions to the Embassy on August 17, noting that the "Embassy should renew representations regarding

<sup>113</sup>Letter to Congressman Alvin M. Bentley from Thruston B. Morton, August 10, 1954 611.61251/8-254.



Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble. Timing and level of the next approach are left to your discretion."<sup>114</sup> Bohlen replied, "we believe it is preferable to wait two weeks or so after the Soviet August 23 note re Rostvorov before again taking up the matter of imprisoned Americans (Marchuk, Verdine, Noble) in order to avoid giving the Soviets ammunition for making a connection between the two."<sup>115</sup> On August 13, the Soviet Embassy at Washington was informed that Rostvorov had decided to remain in the United States. Thruston Morton noted for the record:

Since there no longer exists any reason for withholding representation on behalf of these [three] imprisoned Americans, the Embassy has been instructed to renew its undertakings at the most propitious time. The Department and the Embassy have agreed that a delay of several weeks would give an opportunity for the Rostvorov matter to subside and possibly place our representations in a more favorable light.

Since it does not appear wise to put this explanation in writing, an officer of EE can inform Representative Thompson orally of our reasoning in this case if he is not satisfied with the explanation presented . . . .<sup>116</sup>

On August 27, Congressman T. Ashton Thompson wrote to Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton. "If the Soviet Foreign Office has not given a reply to the Embassy's note of February 5 regarding Private Verdine and the two other American citizens reported to be imprisoned in the Soviet Union, may I respectfully request that further efforts be made to have these men released."<sup>117</sup> Morton responded two weeks later with a letter, his second to Congressman Thompson since May 6 on the same subject, updating him on the dates that protest notes were delivered on the behalf of Verdine. Morton added that an additional protest was planned but in the meantime the Congressman could phone an officer of the Office of Eastern European

<sup>114</sup>From State to Moscow (Confidential), August 17, 1954, 611.61251/8-1754.

<sup>115</sup>From Moscow #282, to State (Confidential), August 26, 1954, 611.61251/8-2654.

<sup>116</sup>Memorandum by Mr. James, EE (Confidential), September 2, 1954, FW611.61251/7-2754.

<sup>117</sup>Letter to Thruston B. Morton from Congressman T. Ashton Thompson, August 27, 1954, 611.61251/8-2754.

Affairs to discuss the case informally if he had additional questions.<sup>118</sup>

On September 10, Ambassador Bohlen "sent a first person note to Gromyko today expressing hope for an immediate reply to the Embassy's 7-months-long representations re imprisoned Americans (Noble, Marchuk, Verdine). If this does not produce results within 10 days, we shall make a recommendation for the next step."<sup>119</sup> The note reads as follows:

Excellency:

I have received no reply to my letter of June 8, 1954 to Mr. V. A. Zorin regarding three American citizens who are imprisoned in the USSR, despite the fact that Mr. Zorin had informed me as early as May 11 that he expected to give me an answer in the not-too-distant future. Although the American government considers this matter one of great urgency and importance, the Ministry has failed to give any answer to a series of representations made by the Embassy over a period of more than seven months.

I hope that you will be able to give me the Ministry's reply on this subject in the immediate future.<sup>120</sup>

On September 23, Ambassador Bohlen reported "We have received no answer from the Soviet Foreign Ministry regarding the imprisoned Americans, Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble. I therefore plan to find an early opportunity to raise the subject with Gromyko in a personal call."<sup>121</sup>

On October 24, Ambassador Bohlen "took advantage of a call on Molotov to leave with him an aide-mémoire on imprisoned Americans." The text of the note follows:

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<sup>118</sup>Letter to Congressman T. Ashton Thompson from Thruston B. Morton, September 7, 1954, 611.61251/8-2754.

<sup>119</sup>From Moscow #363, to State (Confidential), September 10, 1954, 611.61251/9-1054.

<sup>120</sup>Attached to from Moscow #142, to State (Confidential), September 28, 1954, 611.61251/9-2854.

<sup>121</sup>From Moscow #425, to State (Confidential), September 23, 1954, 611.61251/9-2354.

Over a period of eight months the Embassy of the United States of America has addressed a series of communications to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics regarding three American citizens, William T. Marchuk, William A. Verdine, and John Hellmuth Noble, who are imprisoned in the Soviet Union. This series includes the Embassy's notes No. 660 of February 5, 1954, No. 765 of March 16, 1954, No. 843 of April 8, 1954, No. 1046 of June 8, 1954, and No. 226 of September 10, 1954.

In addition, on May 11, 1954 during the course of a personal call, the American Ambassador raised this subject with Mr. Zorin, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, at which time Mr. Zorin stated that he hoped to give a reply in the not-too-distant future.

In drawing the Foreign Minister's attention to this subject the Ambassador expressed the hope that Mr. Molotov would interest himself personally in the matter and arrange for an early reply to the Embassy's representations.<sup>122</sup>

In another effort to promote the prospects for the release of the three Americans, Secretary of State Dulles notified the American Embassy that the U.S. delegation to the United Nations sought permission to make a speech about forced labor since, in the delegation's view, "this would be an excellent opportunity to place further pressure on the USSR for information on Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble."<sup>123</sup> Responding to the Secretary's request for the Embassy's position, the Department was advised, "we see no advantage at this time, and possible disadvantage" in raising the issue of the three Americans at the UN. The first factor, the Embassy noted,

is specific and is that should the Soviet Government by some chance be considering freeing these Americans, premature publicity could be prejudicial to their cases. We are aware in this connection how cumbersome Soviet bureaucratic machinery is especially where security organs are concerned.

The second factor is generic. Propaganda use of this case relatively soon (especially in Soviet bureaucratic practice) after Ambassador's

<sup>122</sup>From Moscow #599, to State (Secret), October 24, 1954, 611.61251/10-2454.

<sup>123</sup>From State #378, to Moscow (Limited Official Use), November 12, 1954, 611.61251/11-1254.

representation could be regarded here as lack of seriousness attached to top level representations on matters we in fact consider very important. Erring on the side of 'correctness' in our treatment of the Ambassador's approach to Molotov could therefore be a useful asset in [this] and future representations.

When ample opportunity has been accorded to the Soviet Government for a reply to the October approach, or if we get some word soon, we could re-examine the publicity angle in light of the circumstances then prevailing.<sup>124</sup>

The Department of State responded to an inquiry from William T. Marchuk's father, who wrote for information about what was being done to obtain the release of his son. Ambassador Bohlen asked the Officer in Charge of USSR Affairs to provide an update on the status of U.S. representations and to note that "it is our hope that the Soviet Government will in the near future take favorable action on our requests and that your son and the two other Americans will be released." The officer concluded, "I trust that good news concerning your son will soon be forthcoming."<sup>125</sup>

On December 28, 1954, the Associated Press, citing "returning Austrian POWs," reported that "US citizens Verdine, Marchuk, and Noble in Soviet POW camps southeast of Moscow" were in "excellent health and may be released soon."<sup>126</sup> On December 29, the American Ambassador wrote to the Foreign Ministry:

You will recall that on October 23, 1954, I left an Aide-Mémoire with you which concerned the continued and unexplained imprisonment in the Soviet Union of the American citizens William T. Marchuk, William A. Verdine, and John Hellmuth Noble who have been the subject of a series of communications from this Embassy to the Ministry, as well as of personal representations by me.

In again directing your attention to this matter, I wish to emphasize the urgency and importance which my Government attaches to it.

<sup>124</sup>From Moscow #758, to State (Secret), November 13, 1954, 611.61251/11-1354.

<sup>125</sup>Letter to Mr. Thomas Marchuk from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., December 10, 1954, 611.61251/11-2954.

<sup>126</sup>From State #1780, to Vienna (Official Use Only), December 28, 1954, 611.61251/12-2854.

It is difficult for my Government to understand the serious delay in the clarification of the status of these men, and I urge your intervention with the appropriate Soviet authorities in order that they may be permitted to depart from the Soviet Union at the earliest opportunity.<sup>127</sup>

There appeared to be some progress toward obtaining the release of the three Americans. The DoS advised the Embassy in Moscow that a press release, scheduled to be released on December 31, stated, "The American Embassy at Moscow was officially informed yesterday by the Soviet Foreign Office that American citizens William T. Marchuk and John Hellmuth Noble will be released to American authorities in Berlin. The Foreign Office said that the time of the release in Berlin would be communicated to the Embassy later. Their release follows repeated representations on their behalf by the American Embassy in Moscow." The DoS went on to inform the Embassy, "If queried by Press regarding Verdine, Department spokesman planning to say that Soviet Foreign Office has stated it has no announcement to make regarding his case at this time, but that the American Embassy in Moscow will continue to press for further information concerning him. Would appreciate urgently any guidance you may wish to offer on treatment of Verdine aspect. You should not however make further approach to Foreign Office on Verdine prior to receipt of instructions from Department. We are informing families."<sup>128</sup> The Embassy was also advised not to release the "full text of the Soviet note prior to the release of Marchuk and Noble. In view of your feeling that to do otherwise might possibly prejudice the release of the two men, the Department will not issue any release until the men are turned over in Berlin."<sup>129</sup> The Department summarized the Soviet note for the press on January 2, 1955, to counteract "undesirable speculation along lines that Soviet

<sup>127</sup>From American Embassy Moscow #503, to V. M. Molotov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, December 29, 1954, 611.61251/2-2954.

<sup>128</sup>From State #512, to Moscow (Official Use Only), December 30, 1954, 611.61251/12-3054.

<sup>129</sup>From State #515, to Moscow (Official Use Only), December 31, 1954, 611.61251/12-3154.

note had said three U.S. citizens would only be released in exchange for four persons claimed by Soviets, e.g. the crew of the Tuapse.<sup>130</sup>

On January 8, the Department of State received a letter from Walter O. Deichmann who sought information concerning his son "who was drafted in the German Wehrmacht."<sup>131</sup> Deichmann wondered whether he could get the mailing addresses for John Noble and William Marchuk to inquire whether they had any information about the whereabouts of his son. The DoS provided both addresses on January 17, 1955.<sup>132</sup> Though the DoS had no information on Deichmann's son, the U.S. government continued throughout 1955 to accumulate and evaluate evidence concerning American citizens reportedly held in the USSR illegally. The Department was informed on January 21 that a repatriated German prisoner reported seeing "an American soldier, James Biber of Milwaukee, Wisconsin" in a Soviet prison.<sup>133</sup> The alleged American was reported to have been held in Berlin-Lichtenberg, Torgau, and finally transported to Siberia. The source added, "I suspect that this brave American soldier isn't living any more." Another German ex-prisoner called at the American Consul General in Jerusalem to report that "while in prison in Potsdam in 1947 she had seen written on a table in her prison cell, apparently by means of a finger nail, the following: 'Walter Baum, Baum Blvd., Pittsburgh.'"<sup>134</sup>

In early January, Congressman Thompson wrote to the DoS to renew his inquiry on behalf of Private Verdine's mother. Thompson, referring to a "recent report that prisoners returning from Soviet Russia say that Private Verdine is a prisoner of the Russians and is suffering from a severe case of tuberculosis," asked "that every possible means be exhausted to obtain the release of this man in order that he may be placed in a hospital and given the treatment necessary for his

<sup>130</sup>From State #517, to Moscow (Official Use Only), January 2, 1955, 611.61251/1-255.

<sup>131</sup>Letter from Walter O. Deichmann to the Department of State, January 8, 1955, 611.61241/1-855.

<sup>132</sup>Letter from E. J. Madill, Assistant Director, Office of Special Consular Services, to Mr. Walter O. Deichmann, January 17, 1955, 611.61241/1-855.

<sup>133</sup>From HICOG Bonn #1548, to State (Official Use Only), January 21, 1955, 611.61241/1-2155.

<sup>134</sup>From AMCONGENERAL Jerusalem #117, to State (Confidential), February 9, 1955, 611.61251/2-955.

recovery."<sup>135</sup> Assistant Secretary Morton replied by informing the Congressman that "William A. Verdine would be released from Soviet imprisonment and turned over to American authorities in Berlin. . . . We have received more encouraging information regarding Mr. Verdine's physical condition. One of the two Americans recently released from Soviet imprisonment reports having seen him on January 2 in a transient camp and states that his health was not bad."<sup>136</sup>

On January 10, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent the following note to the American Embassy:

Note No. 5/osa

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and, supplementary to the note of the Ministry No. 122/osa of December 29, 1954, has the honor to state that the question of the release of the American citizen William Verdine, serving sentence in the Soviet Union, has been decided positively. He will be handed over to the American authorities in Berlin. Concerning the time of handing him over, the Embassy will be informed separately.<sup>137</sup>

On January 14, 1955, the Soviet Foreign Ministry delivered another note to the American Embassy in Moscow:

No. 4/OSA

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and, in supplement to the Ministry's note No. 112/OSA dated December 29, 1954, has the honor to state that Marchuk and Noble, American citizens, were handed over to repre-

<sup>135</sup>Letter from Congressman A. T. Thompson to Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton, January 6, 1955, 611.61251/1-655.

<sup>136</sup>Letter from Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton to Congressman Thompson, January 14, 1955, 611.61251/1-655.

<sup>137</sup>Attached to from Moscow #293, to State (Unclassified), January 18, 1955, 611.61251/1-1855.

sentatives of the American authorities in Berlin on January 8, 1955.<sup>138</sup>

The Soviet Foreign Ministry submitted this complementary note on January 21:

Note No. 7/OSA

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and supplementary to the Ministry's note no. 5/OSA of January 10, has the honor to state that the American citizen, William VERDINE, was handed over to representatives of the American authorities in Berlin on January 20, 1955.<sup>139</sup>

The release of these American citizens raised an important question in Washington. Should the United States make a protest to the USSR on the grounds that the Soviet government had not informed the U.S. government that American citizens had been retained?

This issue was discussed within the DoS for at least two months, beginning in late January 1955. Frustration within the DoS mounted as the Department was whipsawed between those who demanded action and the Soviet government's unwillingness to provide information. The DoS did not want internal frustration to be vented in a protest whose effect would be to diminish prospects for the release of other Americans. An internal memorandum illustrates the policy aspects of this dilemma.

Subject: Advisability of Protesting to USSR for Failure to Inform us of Detention of American Citizens

After repeated representations by Embassy Moscow, the Soviet Government has finally released Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble, three Americans who have been held in Soviet labor camps for several years. We were never informed of their detention by the Soviet Government and learned of their presence in the Soviet Union in reports made by returning German and Austrian POWs.

<sup>138</sup>From Moscow #287, to State (Unclassified), January 14, 1955, 611.61251/1-1455.

<sup>139</sup>Attached to from Moscow #465, to State (Unclassified), May 24, 1955, 611.61251/5-2455.



In the early part of 1954, the Soviet Union released Cox and Towers, two Americans who also had been held for several years by the Soviets and about whom we had learned from returning POWs.

The question now arises as to the advisability of submitting a protest to the Soviet Government regarding its failure to notify the United States Government of the detention of these American citizens. The Soviet failure to take such action is in clear violation of the provisions of the Litvinov Agreement, which stipulated that each Government should adopt measures to inform representatives of the other Government as soon as possible, and in any case within 7 days, whenever a national of the other country was arrested.

Following the release of Cox and Towers last year, EE recommended that a protest be made to the Soviet Government but Ambassador Bohlen felt this would be inadvisable so long as we were interested in making further representations regarding Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble. Now that Marchuk, Verdine, and Noble have been released, we favor making a protest for the record, even though it appears that there may be other cases of Americans held in the Soviet Union which we will wish to press in the future. In our view, it is unlikely that a protest made by us based on the Litvinov Agreement would harm future representations regarding other Americans held in the Soviet Union.

It is possible, of course, that a protest by us to the Soviet Government on this subject in the near future might have some harmful effect on the situation of the American prisoners held by the Chinese Communists. If you feel that this consideration is of importance, you may wish to discuss it at the Secretary's Staff Conference to ascertain the views of other interested offices regarding this matter.

In the event that it is felt that a protest to the Soviets on the prisoners being held would not adversely affect the prisoners held by the Chinese Communists, we believe we should go ahead with such a protest in the near future.<sup>140</sup>

The DoS circulated a draft protest to an interagency group in the U.S. government that included the Department of Defense and the

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<sup>140</sup>Memorandum from EUR-Mr. Livingston T. Merchant, to EE-Ray L. Thurston (Confidential), January 31, 1955, 611.61251/1-3155.

Central Intelligence Agency. Each agency confirmed that the United States was not currently holding and had "never arrested and held in prison adult Soviet citizens (non-defectors) without notifying Soviet authorities."<sup>141</sup> The determination was that no "Soviet citizens have been arrested" or detained by U.S. authorities "without the Soviet authorities having been notified within a reasonable time."<sup>142</sup> This issue was addressed so that any Soviet charges to that effect could be immediately and authoritatively rejected. The DoS was also mindful of the impact that such a protest might have on John H. Noble's request to have the DoS "ask the Soviets for financial compensation for his imprisonment."<sup>143</sup> The Soviet Affairs desk officer pushed the other agencies to review the protest note quickly "since we would like to present the note to the Soviet Government in the near future."<sup>144</sup>

The draft of the U.S. government's protest that was considered by the interagency group in March, 1955 reads as follows:

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, on instructions from the United States Government, has the honor to refer to the Embassy's representations in the past concerning the arrest and imprisonment of the American citizens Leland Towers, Homer H. Cox, William T. Marchuk, John Hellmuth Noble, and William A. Verdine.

<sup>141</sup>Page five of the draft protest note, No. F780001-0312, dated March 24, 1955, and page five annotated by Starrie A. James, Chief, Liaison Division, Collection and Dissemination, CIA, dated March 2, 1955.

<sup>142</sup>Memorandum for the File, Subject: Protest to Soviet Government for Failure to Inform U.S. Government of the Detention of American Citizens (Secret), April 20, 1955, 611.61251/4-2055. Among the agencies consulted were the Office of German Affairs, the Office of Western European Affairs, the Department of the Air Force, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of the Army, and the Department of the Navy.

<sup>143</sup>Handwritten note No. F780001-0305 attached to draft protest note signed "WJS," probably Walter J. Stoessel, Jr.

<sup>144</sup>Memorandum from EE-Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., to OLI-Mr. Sidney A. Buford and IAD-Mr. Leo J. Vincelette, Subject: Proposed note to Soviet Government protesting the failure to notify U.S. Government of imprisoned American citizens, March 28, 1955.

The Soviet Government will recall that the United States Government was never informed of the imprisonment of these American citizens.

In October 1953, the United States Government learned through sources not connected with the Soviet Government that American citizens were being held in Soviet prisons. On November 2, 1953 the Embassy requested information from the Soviet Government concerning the American citizens Homer H. Cox, Leland Towers, Colonel Cerny, a First Lieutenant Cushman, and Clifford Brown, all of whom had been reported seen at a Soviet prison camp at Vorkuta, Komi ASSR, but whose imprisonment had never been made known to the Embassy. No reply was received to this note nor to a later note dated November 25 regarding these cases. After personal representations by the Ambassador on December 21, 1953 the Soviet Government admitted that Homer H. Cox and Leland Towers were being held in Soviet prisons and stated that a decision had been made to release them to American authorities in Germany. They were subsequently released on December 29, 1953. Homer H. Cox reported he had been imprisoned by Soviet authorities since September 1949, and Leland Towers stated he had been imprisoned since October 1951.

In early 1954 the United States Government learned, also through sources not connected with the Soviet Government, that two American soldiers William T. Marchuk and William A. Verdine had been seen in Soviet prisons, along with an American citizen, John Hellmuth Noble, whose case had been the subject of numerous unsuccessful representations by American authorities in Germany and later by this Embassy.

On February 5, 1954 the Embassy requested the Soviet Government to make an immediate investigation of the cases of William T. Marchuk, William A. Verdine, and John Hellmuth Noble and to supply the Embassy with full details concerning their imprisonment. No reply was received to this note. The Embassy repeated its representation on March 16 and April 8. The Ambassador called personally on the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs on May 11, and written representations were renewed on June 8, September 10 and October 23, 1954. These repeated representations on behalf of imprisoned American citizens were ignored by the Soviet Government.

On December 30, 1954 the Soviet Government admitted that these men were in its custody and informed the Embassy that William T.

Marchuk and John Hellmuth Noble would be released to American authorities in Berlin; the Embassy was later informed that William A. Verdine would be released. All were subsequently released to American authorities in Berlin.

The imprisonment of American citizens by the Soviet Government without any notification whatsoever to American authorities is in contradiction to basic humanitarian principles and a regrettable departure from usual practices with regard to such cases which have been established over the course of years and which have become a part of international law. Furthermore, the failure of the Soviet Government to notify the United States Government of the detention of the five American citizens Homer H. Cox, Leland Towers, William T. Marchuk, John Hellmuth Noble, and William A. Verdine, is a flagrant violation of the provisions of the exchange of letters of November 16, 1933 between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mr. Maxim M. Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, at the time of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States Government and the Soviet Government. These letters contain a provision whereby each Government agreed to adopt measures to inform representatives of the other Government as soon as possible, and in any case within seven days, whenever a national of the other country was arrested.

The United States Government takes a serious view of the inexcusable treatment of these American citizens by the Soviet authorities and the failure of the Soviet Government to observe its agreed undertakings to enable the United States Government to extend protection to its nationals. Arbitrary actions of this character serve only to increase tensions between the two Governments and are not in accord with Soviet professions in behalf of peace and justice among nations, or with established standards of international law, practice and decency in the conduct of diplomatic relations.

The United States Government vigorously protests the action of the Soviet Government with regard to the American citizens Leland Towers, Homer H. Cox, William T. Marchuk, John Hellmuth Noble, and William A. Verdine and requests that the Soviet Government comply with the terms of the agreements whereby it undertook to notify American authorities of any American citizens detained by Soviet authorities.

The draft was circulated to the American Embassy in Moscow for comments as well. The American ambassador remarked that if the

note is primarily intended as a protest which is to receive publicity and which is not anticipated will evoke any change in Soviet behavior, proposed text would seem to meet this purpose. I believe, however, that the effectiveness of the protest would be enhanced by adhering throughout to straightforward language and suggest the deletion of such words as "whatsoever," "regrettable," and "flagrant" in paragraph 7, and "inexcusable" and "arbitrary" in paragraph 8, and "vigorously" in paragraph 9.

Ambassador Bohlen suggested that if the DoS wanted to explore the sincerity of Soviet wishes for reduced tensions and if the DoS determined that a "serious effort" to obtain the release of other imprisoned Americans might be fruitful, Bohlen recommended the "note should be directed more to that end and should not place undue stress on Soviet past failures to abide by the provisions of the Roosevelt-Litvinov exchange." Bohlen thought that by focusing at length on past violations the Soviets might be reluctant to release more Americans if doing so would force them to admit additional violations.

Bohlen submitted the following redraft of the lead paragraphs of the protest note:

[Complimentary opening] . . . and has the honor to draw the attention of the Ministry to an exchange of letters of November 16, 1933, between President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Mr. Maxim Nan Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, at the time of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S. Government and Soviet Government, under provisions of which each Government agreed to adopt measures to inform representatives of other government as soon as possible, and in any case within 7 days, whenever a national of the other country is arrested.

In the above connection, the American Embassy wishes to reiterate its request of November 2, 1953, for information concerning American citizens Colonel Cerny, 1st Lieutenant Cushman, and Clifford Brown, all of whom have been reported seen at Soviet prison camp at Vorkuta, Komi ASSR, but whose imprisonment has never been officially reported by the Soviet Government.

The Government of the United States attaches great importance to provisions of the exchange of letters noted above, which were intended to guarantee and facilitate, in accordance with accepted

principles of international law, fulfillment by the Government of the United States of its right and obligation to protect the interests of American nationals. It consequently views with concern the failure of the Soviet Government in the past to abide by provisions of agreement embodied in this exchange of letters and expects that the Soviet Government will promptly provide the Embassy with information as to names, whereabouts, reason for detention, and any other relevant particulars regarding American citizens who may now, or in the future, may be in the custody of Soviet authorities.

Bohlen suggested that the most effective way to send this note to the Soviet Foreign Ministry would be "personal delivery by an Embassy officer" that would include an oral reference to the Soviet interest in reducing tensions. "If the Department's text is used, I believe little will be gained by personal delivery."<sup>145</sup> The DoS informed Ambassador Bohlen that "the Department approves the alternate quoted text proposed by the Embassy and personal delivery soonest."<sup>146</sup>

One day after receiving authorization from the DoS, "an Embassy officer this afternoon delivered the note with alternate text approved by the Department to Deputy Chief of the American Section Bazykin. The officer orally stressed U.S. Government concern for its nationals and the expectation that it will be informed if the three men listed in the note or any other U.S. citizens are in Soviet custody. The officer stated that no publicity to the note is intended at this time. Bazykin said he would refer the note to his superiors and in ostensible defense of Soviet behavior said he seemed to remember Soviet authorities in Western Germany had raised with U.S. authorities the question of the arrest of Soviet citizens but had received no reply. Officer said he was not familiar with the matter and asked if the subject had ever been raised with the Embassy. Bazykin could supply no details and also said his remark should not be construed as the Minister's reply."<sup>147</sup> Bohlen suggested to the DoS that "since the United States Government through this Embassy has repeatedly referred to the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement in making its request for information on American citizens believed to be in Soviet custody, I believe that

<sup>145</sup>From Moscow #2141, to State (Secret), June 2, 1955, 611.61251/6-255.

<sup>146</sup>From State #1034, to Moscow (Secret), June 6, 1955, 611.61251/6-255.

<sup>147</sup>From Moscow #2186, to State (Secret), June 7, 1955, 611.61251/6-755. The full text of the protest note is attached. It is consistent with Ambassador Bohlen's revised text.

Soviet authorities in Germany should be given the opportunity to interview any and all Soviet citizens detained on the basis of United States sentences. This would strengthen our hand in future approaches to the Soviet Government in similar cases."<sup>148</sup>

Congressman James G. Polk wrote to the Secretary of State on May 9 on behalf of several "constituents concerning the imprisonment of American citizens in Russian prison camps." Polk quoted one constituent who appealed

in the name of all that is good and all that is sane, we entreat you to do something soon for these unfortunate Americans, enslaved and tortured in the hands of our enemies in Russian prison camps.

Delaying this matter is unworthy of American principles. Murdering our fellow Americans is serious enough, but we know only too well the 'torture' method is preferred by the enemy. This is borne out by their diabolic 'brainwashing' program. We have heard this for so long—we are getting hardened—God forbid!

Polk, who indicated that he had received many inquiries on this subject, asked for a progress report on what was being done to repatriate American citizens so that he could respond to his constituents.<sup>149</sup>

Assistant Secretary Thruston B. Morton responded a little over a week later. In his response, Morton noted, "In years past a number of American citizens have been arrested and imprisoned in the USSR and the Soviet-dominated countries of Eastern Europe. With exception of a few cases, this Government has been successful in obtaining release through diplomatic or other measures of those persons who are recognized as American citizens." Morton went on to list Americans who had been released as a result of the efforts of the United States government. The list is shown in Table 3.6.

<sup>148</sup>From Moscow #535, to State (Official Use Only), September 1, 1955, 611.61251/9-155.

<sup>149</sup>Letter from Congressman James G. Polk to the Secretary of State, May 9, 1955, 611.61241/5-955.

**Table 3.6**  
**American Citizens Released from Soviet Bloc Countries as a**  
**Result of the Efforts of the U.S. Government (1955)**

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Hungary

Robert A. Vogeler  
Israel Jacobson of the American Jewish Joint  
Distribution Committee

Czechoslovakia

William N. Oatis  
George H. Jones |—American soldiers  
Clarence R. Hill |  
Lieutenant Luther G. Roland —American pilot  
Stanley E. Abbot |—Mormon missionaries  
C. Aldon Johnson |  
Vlasta Vraz —Representative of the American Relief for  
Czechoslovakia

The Soviet Union

Homer H. Cox  
Leland Towers  
John H. Noble  
William A. Verdine  
William T. Marchuk

Poland

Hermann Field

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Morton explained that efforts were being made on behalf of Americans by the U.S. government "whenever information concerning their cases is obtained and such assistance can be extended without prejudice to their personal safety." The Assistant Secretary also addressed statements to the effect that "large numbers of American citizens are detained in Eastern Europe." These people tended to be dual nationals held in countries that did not recognize the legality of dual nationality. Morton summarized known facts about these people, many of whom returned to Europe between World Wars I and II, and concluded that the United States government "does not accept



the position of the Eastern European governments in this matter and is continuing to give serious attention to this problem."<sup>150</sup>

On May 27, the sister of Charles A. Demmler wrote to the Secretary of State to inquire whether there was any information concerning her brother who was declared missing in the Hurtgen Forest in Germany on November 29, 1944. Demmler's sister had seen a one-paragraph story in the *Columbus Citizen* noting that a group of Austrians returning from imprisonment in the Soviet Union had heard of an American named "Dimmler" or "Duembler."<sup>151</sup> Demmler's sister wrote, "It is certainly in the realm of possibility that his uniform and tags were traded by a German. Later he may have been captured by the Russians as a German. In any case the enclosed clipping has started us wondering all over again."<sup>152</sup> On June 14, Congressman John W. Bricker wrote to the Adjutant General of the Army, who referred the letter to the Department of State, on behalf of Demmler's brother who sought similar information.<sup>153</sup> The Department of State, after an internal review, referred the inquiry to the Department of Defense, which reported its findings back to State. On June 30, the DoS wrote to Demmler's sister, "Consultation with the Department of Defense has disclosed that the records pertaining to your brother show that he was killed in action and that his body was properly identified and buried in Belgium and that this information was reported to your family."<sup>154</sup>

The DoS noted in an internal memorandum:

While it is not our policy to make representations on these cases unless the American citizenship has been established, it is difficult for the Department to refuse this family's request. The family will always believe there is a possibility that their son is alive and in the

<sup>150</sup>Letter from Thruston B. Morton to Congressman James G. Polk, May 18, 1955, 611.61241/5-955.

<sup>151</sup>"Red Slave," *The Columbus Citizen*, April 29, 1955.

<sup>152</sup>Letter to the Secretary of State, May 27, 1955, 611.61241/5-2755.

<sup>153</sup>Letter from Congressman John W. Bricker to Maj. General John A. Klein, Adjutant General, Department of the Army, June 14, 1955, 611.61241/6-1455. Letter from Thruston B. Morton to Senator Bricker, June 30, 1955, 611.61241/6-1455.

<sup>154</sup>Letter from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., Officer in Charge, USSR Affairs, June 30, 1955, 611.61241/5-2755.

Soviet Union, and will accuse the Department of arbitrarily refusing to follow up the matter. We are impressed with the similarity of these unusual names. It is therefore recommended that the attached two letters be initialed and that USSR Affairs be authorized to include the name Demmler (Dimmler, Duembler) in a list we are compiling of persons believed identified as American citizens detained in the USSR, to be presented to the Soviet Government by the Embassy at Moscow. At the present time the list includes four persons with "Mr. Demmler."<sup>155</sup>

The DoS instructed the "American Embassy at Moscow to make representations to the Soviet Government with a view to obtaining information concerning this alleged American citizen."<sup>156</sup> Many other letters were sent by Americans who held out hope that their relatives had not been killed as first reported but rather somehow imprisoned in the Soviet Union. Some of these cases were considered by the White House staff.<sup>157</sup> On July 1, the Embassy was instructed:

Make representations to the Soviet Government in the cases of five Americans reported to be in Soviet custody. Their American citizenship is believed sufficiently established to justify action in their behalf. While four of the cases have been referred to in the press, no publicity has been given to Major William Thompson, believed to be Major Wirt Elizabeth Thompson. There is a strong likelihood that the man in the Soviet Union is Major Wirt Elizabeth Thompson. In the absence of confirmation, however, we hesitate to raise the hopes of his parents that this airman, missing since 1944, is still alive.

In addition to these instructions, the DoS noted

members of the Feingersch family called at the Department June 29 at Senator Ives's suggestion and requested the strongest representations on behalf of Murray Feingersch, including an approach by

<sup>155</sup>Memorandum from EE-Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., to EUR-Mr. Walworth Barbour (Official Use Only), June 22, 1955, FW611.61241/5-2755

<sup>156</sup>Stoessel letter, June 30, 1955.

<sup>157</sup>The White House Route Slip from A. J. Goodpaster, Staff Secretary, to Mr. W. K. Scott, Director, Executive Secretary, Department of State, June 13, 1955, 611.61241/6-1355.

the President at the "Summit" meeting. They were informed that representations would be made in Moscow and that their other request would receive consideration. The President and Representative Celler are also informing the Feingersch family that representations are being made. The family has been requested to give no publicity to the Department's actions.<sup>158</sup>

On July 6, the DoS was asked to determine whether Christian Dun, who was identified by a returning German prisoner, was "in fact the son of the former American Ambassador to Rome." The Tracing Service of the German Red Cross had passed this information along though they doubted "the correctness of this statement."<sup>159</sup>

Senator John Bricker wrote to the DoS in July. In this letter, Bricker passed along inquiries from several constituents who "inquired about American soldiers of World War II who are held in Russian slave labor camps in Europe. Since I was unaware that the Soviet Union held any of our soldiers who fought in World War II, I would appreciate the Department's advice before replying to the letters I have received."<sup>160</sup> Assistant Secretary Morton replied one week later:

To the Department's knowledge there are no United States soldiers in the category of prisoners-of-war being held in the Soviet Union.

You are doubtless aware that there have been incidents involving American soldiers stationed in Germany since World War II, who either inadvertently or voluntarily entered the Soviet Zone of Germany. The Department of Defense, through the Commander of the United States Army of Europe, has interceded with the Soviet military authorities with regard to such cases and has succeeded in obtaining the return of most of the individuals concerned. It has been our experience that these cases can usually be settled by the local United States and Soviet authorities. When representations on this level fail, we make formal representation to the Soviet Government through diplomatic channels. Representations by our Embassy at Moscow to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs have during the past year brought about the release from Soviet custody

<sup>158</sup>Memorandum from EUR-Mr. Barbour to EE-Mr. Crawford.

<sup>159</sup>From AMCONGEN Hamburg to State (Unclassified), July 6, 1955.

<sup>160</sup>Letter from Senator John Bricker to Assistant Secretary Thruston B. Morton, July 5, 1955, 611.61241/7-555.

of five American citizens, including three United States soldiers who were absent from their stations without leave and were arrested while in the Soviet Zone of Germany.

The newspapers have recently carried reports of alleged American citizens having been seen in the Soviet Union by foreign prisoners-of-war and other returnees. The Department investigates these and other reports concerning the alleged detention of American citizens in the Soviet Union. If sufficient evidence is obtained to establish to a reasonable degree the American citizenship of the subject of the report, representations on their behalf are made to the Soviet Government.

I trust you will assure your constituents that the Department of State has no information indicating that there are American soldiers from World War II being held in Soviet labor camps; that while press statements of persons released from Soviet custody, including American citizen John Noble, have indicated that American soldiers have been seen in the Soviet Union, the most detailed and exhaustive investigations have to the present time failed to substantiate these rumors. The Department continues to actively pursue all possible leads which might bring to light information that would enable us to identify persons in Soviet custody who are alleged to be American citizens.<sup>161</sup>

The DoS instructed the American Embassy at Moscow to raise five cases with Soviet authorities. These five, "reported as American citizens in Soviet custody by released POWs believed sufficiently identified to justify representations on their behalf to the Soviet Government," are the following:

Cumish, Wilfred C. At first reported only by last name, Kumith or Kumish, later as Sgt. Robert Kumith, Bob Cunish, or Kumis.

Believed to be Private Wilfred C. Cumish, Regular Army No. 14208431, Born September 18, 1915, Amesbury, Massachusetts. Suffers from skin disease diagnosed as Ichthyosis. AWOL March 24, 1948 from Headquarters 7769, Mil. Intelligence Detachment Vienna.

<sup>161</sup>Letter from Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton to Senator Bricker, July 14, 1955, 611.61241/7-555.

**Reported seen in Vladimir Prison June 1951-1952 by Japanese POWs and in December 1954 by German POW. Said to have skin disease.**

**Major Wirt Elizabeth Thompson, U.S. Air Force. (Reported as Major William Thompson, U.S. Air Force).**

**Major Wirt Elizabeth Thompson, Army Serial 0425939AC is known as Worth or William. Born Italy, Texas, August 8, 1920. Attended High School San Antonio, Texas. Missing in action December 4, 1944. Pilot of aircraft No. 34743-15821. Departed from Myitkyina, Burma December 4, 1944 going on Mission to Kunming, China. Reported shot down in enemy territory. Reported seen in Budenskaya prison near Moscow from 1944 to 1948; later transferred to Tayshet camp (compound 026). Informed POW he formerly lived in San Antonio.**

**Murray Feingersch. Variously reported as Murray Feingers, Mike Feingers, Murray Feingage, Murray Feingersch.**

**Believed to be Murray Feingersch who changed his name to Murray Fields, Army Serial No. 10610213. Born Brooklyn June 1, 1919. Enlisted Army October 17, 1940, honorably discharged 22 September 1941 medical reasons, Dementia Praecox. Reenlisted 17 February 1947 Germany without disclosing prior army service. AWOL June 2, 1948. Probably now a mental case.**

**Reported seen from 1952 to 1953 in Camp No. 5110/50 at Vershni Uralsk. Also seen at Camp Alexandrovsk. Said to have been arrested in Prague and sentenced to twenty-five year's imprisonment for espionage. Suffering from head injury from suicide attempt and reported to be in bad physical condition. In 1953 he was transferred to another part of the same jail.**

**Sidney Ray Sparks. Identified by Army Disciplinary Section as Private Ray Sparks AWOL as of December 1951. Born December 12, 1932, Wrightsville, Georgia.**

**Reported imprisoned at Camp Potma, labor camp and to be ill. Informed POWs he was arrested by Soviet authorities in East Berlin**

in 1951. Stated he was from Tennile, Georgia, where his mother now resides.<sup>162</sup>

**Demmler, Charles August, Private.** Various reported without first name Demmler, Dimmler, or Duemmler.

Person reported by above last names may be Private Charles August Demmler, missing in action in Germany in 1944.

The DoS instructed the Embassy to "call on Soviet Foreign Office soonest and deliver note selecting from above data believed necessary to assist the Soviet Government in identifying case. . . . Withhold all publicity on representations pending further instructions."<sup>163</sup> Following these instructions, an Embassy officer personally delivered a note to Deputy Chief of the American Section of the Soviet Foreign Ministry Bazykin on July 16. It reads as follows:

Note No. 30

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and with reference to the Embassy's Note No. 873, dated June 7, 1955, wishes to state the following:

In its note of June 7 the Embassy invited attention to the exchange of letters of November 16, 1933, between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mr. Maxim N. Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, under the provisions of which each government agreed to adopt measures to inform representatives of the other government as soon as possible, and in any case within seven days, whenever a national of the other country is arrested.

<sup>162</sup>"Berlin has the following information from consular and army counter intelligence records: Sparks held the rank of private, serial number 14335116 Company L, Third Battalion, Sixth Infantry Regiment, stationed at Berlin. He escaped from the guardhouse on December 4, 1951 and surrendered to Soviet authorities in East Berlin. Reports since then were that on 31 December 1952 he was being held as a spy; on 12 January 1953 he was residing at hotel Stadtenfutzen in the Soviet Zone; on 23 April 1953 he was apprehended for breaking into a railway car in Bautzen to steal radios; on 11 May 1953 allegedly sentenced to 25 years for espionage; from July 2 to 21, 1953 in jail at Brestlitovsk; and in October 1953 he was seen working at mining pit Number 3, Vorkuta." From Berlin #31, to State (Confidential), July 9, 1955, 611.61241/7-955.

<sup>163</sup>From State #9, to Moscow (Confidential), July 6, 1955, 611.61241/7-655.

In this connection the Embassy wishes to request all pertinent information available to the Soviet Government on the following American citizens believed to be in Soviet custody, as well as on American citizens Colonel Cerny, First Lieutenant Cushman, and Clifford Brown, all of whom have been reported seen at the Soviet prison camp at Vorkuta, Komi ASSR, who were the subjects of like requests in Embassy's notes of November 2, 1953, and June 7, 1955:

Wilfred C. Cumish, born September 18, 1915, Amesbury, Massachusetts, Private, U.S. Army; Charles August Demmler, Private, U.S. Army; Murray Fields, born June 1, 1919, Brooklyn, New York, Private, U.S. Army; Ray Sparks, born December 12, 1932, Wrightsville, Georgia, Private, U.S. Army; Wirt Elizabeth Thompson, born August 8, 1920, Italy, Texas, Major, U.S. Army Air Force.

Former prisoners of war recently released from Soviet custody have reported seeing Cumish at Vershni (or Verkhne) Uralsk and more recently at Vladimir prison, where Sparks has also been reported seen. They have also reported seeing Fields at Vershni Uralsk and at Camp Aleksandrovsk. Thompson has been reported seen at Budenskaya prison near Moscow and more recently at Tayshet Camp (Compound 026). The Embassy has no report on the whereabouts of Demmler. Imprisonment or detention of these American citizens has never been officially reported to the United States Government by the Soviet Government.

The Government of the United States of America again wishes to express its concern over the failure of the Soviet Government to provide it promptly and in accordance with the provisions of the exchange of letters noted above with information as to the names, whereabouts, reason for detention, and any other pertinent information regarding American citizens in the custody of Soviet authorities.

The Government of the United States of America seeks this information in the expectation that it will facilitate the prompt release of the American citizens referred to herein.<sup>164</sup>

The United States sought information about and the release of other nationalities as well. Of particular interest was the fate of several hundred thousand German POWs who had not been repatriated fol-

<sup>164</sup>From Moscow #131, to State (Confidential), July 16, 1955, 61.61241/7-1655.

lowing World War II. U.S. policy was to make "every effort . . . to bring about the release of these unfortunate people. A United Nations Ad Hoc Commission on Prisoners of War was brought into being to investigate the question of prisoners of war of World War II still in custody. The United States has given every cooperation to this Commission whereas the Soviet Union has not."<sup>165</sup> Many Americans, however, still believed in the "possibility that [American boys] have been [in Russian slave labor camps in Europe] since World War II and taken when the Russians were our allies. . . . We are freedom-loving Americans, our whole history is based on freedom, how then can a real American be at peace as long as one American boy is enslaved anywhere?"<sup>166</sup>

In August, the efforts of the Department of State and the American Embassy at Moscow continued. The Embassy was informed that "Major Wirt Elizabeth Thompson may be known to the Soviet Government as Major William Thompson, a name used by returning POWs. Suggest this information be given to the Foreign Office."<sup>167</sup> The information was delivered to the Soviet Foreign Ministry the following day.<sup>168</sup> One week later, the Soviet Government informed the DoS that Murray Feingersch "is in the Soviet Union and will be released," though the date of the release was unknown. The DoS promptly notified the family and asked that the "information be kept in strict confidence" until the information appeared in the press.<sup>169</sup>

Congressman William H. Bates was informed on August 25 that Sergeant Cumish, the brother of one of Bates's constituents, "would be released to American authorities."<sup>170</sup> On August 27, Colonel Gromov, the Deputy Director of the Prison Section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, wrote to the Director of Section of the

<sup>165</sup>Draft of letter prepared by Staff Secretary Andrew J. Goodpaster from Sherman Adams, Assistant to the President, to Mr. Doerfler, July 25, 1955, 611.61241/7-2055.

<sup>166</sup>Letter from a group of nine American citizens to Senator George Bener, June 1955, referred to Mr. Thruston Morton, July 21, 1955, 611.61241/7-2155.

<sup>167</sup>From State #143, to Moscow (Official Use Only), August 10, 1955, 611.61241/8-1055.

<sup>168</sup>From Moscow #336, to State (Official Use Only), August 11, 1955, 611.61241/8-1155.

<sup>169</sup>Telegram to Mrs. May Feingersch from Walter J. Stoessel, August 19, 1955, 611.61241/8-1955.

<sup>170</sup>Letter from Assistant Secretary Thruston Morton to Congressman William H. Bates, August 25, 1955, 611.61241/8-1655.



**Countries of America at the Foreign Ministry, Comrade A. A. Soldatov:**

I am sending a letter for your examination from an American citizen, Wilfred Cumish, which is addressed to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow with his request for financial help.

Cumish, who was released early from detention on the basis of an Ukaz [decree] of August 22, 1955 and September 5 of this year, is subject to transfer to U.S. authorities in Berlin.<sup>171</sup>

On September 8, F. Evsenin, Deputy Chief of the Prison Section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, wrote to the Chief of the U.S. Section of the MFA of the USSR, Comrade Bazykin (copy to the Head of the First Special Section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR Colonel A. P. Sirotin) to inform him that Charles F. Hopkins, Wilfred Cumish, and Murray Filde (aka Feinhersh) "have been released early from their places of detention on the basis of an Ukaz of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of August 2, 1955 and September 5, 1955 were transferred in Berlin to a representative of U.S. authorities in Berlin, Mr. DuBois."<sup>172</sup>

Another protest note was delivered to the Soviet Foreign Ministry on September 1:

Note No. 167

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and with reference to Embassy Note No. 30 of July 16 and to Ministry of Foreign Affairs Note No. 75/OSA of August 19 has the honor to state the following:

In its Note No. 75/OSA the Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that investigations were continuing in the cases of Charles Demmler,

<sup>171</sup>Memorandum from Deputy Director of the Prison Section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR Colonel Gromov (Secret) to the Director of Section of the Countries of America, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Comrade A. A. Soldatov, August 27, 1955, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>172</sup>Memorandum from the Deputy Chief of the Prison Section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, F. Evsenin (Secret) to the Chief of the U.S. Section of the MFA of the USSR, Comrade Bazykin September 8, 1955, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

*Ray Sparks, and Wirt Elizabeth Thompson. The Embassy has been informed that a Sydney Ray Sparks was seen in July of this year at Potma. The camp is believed to be 5110/43. This information is being transmitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the hope that it will assist the Ministry in its investigation as to the whereabouts of Ray Sparks.*<sup>173</sup>

The U.S. government "refused to entertain appeals from this Government on behalf of persons who are not American citizens," which meant that no help was extended to the families of those who could not be shown to be American nationals.<sup>174</sup> Once American citizenship was established, the DoS authorized the Embassy to take action.

### **The Baumeister Case**

The Baumeister case illustrates how one POW/MIA issue has been handled by the U.S. government continuously for nearly 50 years.

On August 12, 1955 the father of William G. Baumeister wrote to Senator Edward Thye indicating he had "received information . . . that our son . . . a former Air Force pilot in the United States Air Force, missing since 1944, is alive and in a Russian prison camp."<sup>175</sup> On August 18, Assistant Secretary Morton received a telegram from Thomas F. Lynch, Commander, Twin City Basha China Burma India Veterans Association, urging the DoS to make a "maximum effort" in order to obtain "the release of Lt. William G. Baumeister Jr. of St. Paul, believed held in Russian slave labor camp."<sup>176</sup> On August 29, Assistant Secretary Morton wrote to Senator Thye:

As you were informed over the telephone on August 19, upon receiving your letter of August 15, 1955 with enclosures, I began an

<sup>173</sup>Attached to from Moscow #228, to State (Confidential), August 31, 1955. In May 1956, U.S. officials in Rumania reported that a "source who reportedly was released from a Soviet prison 18 km south of the Arctic Circle in December 1955 states that US soldier Sidney Sparks was a fellow inmate." From USARMA Bucharest #356, to State (Secret), May 7, 1956, 611.61241/5-756.

<sup>174</sup>Letter from George H. Haselton, Acting Assistant Director, Office of Special Counselor Services to Mr. Stanley Malinowski, September 14, 1955, 611.61241/9-1455.

<sup>175</sup>Letter to Senator Edward Thye, August 12, 1955.

<sup>176</sup>611.61241/8-1855.

investigation with a view of learning whether William Baumeister Jr., a United States Air Force pilot who was reported missing in action in 1944 in Burma, could be the Willy F. [redacted] reported to be in Soviet custody by Karl Heinz Schleich, a German prisoner-of-war recently returned to Germany.

I have been informed by the Department of the Air Force that the British Graves Registration Service at Burma reported in August 1954 that one of its search teams received information from a Burmese to the effect that he personally buried the remains of Second Lieutenant William George Baumeister on or about December 23-27, 1944; that Lieutenant Baumeister was a member of the crew of a P-38 aircraft which crashed in a Zibyaung Village, about three miles from Kyontu, Burma, during the Japanese occupation and the British invasion; and that personal effects consisting of Chesterfield cigarettes, American dollars and American savings certificates were turned over to the Japanese military authorities. The British Graves Registration Service further reported that it was not possible at the time to visit the area in which Lieutenant Baumeister was buried since it was occupied by the insurgents. The grave location was determined as 17° 34.20' North 96° 18.30' East.

In light of this report it appears doubtful whether the person alleged to be an American citizen in custody in the Soviet Union and named Willy Baumeister is Lieutenant William George Baumeister Jr. With a view, however, to obtaining all available information relative to this matter, the American Consul General at Frankfurt, Germany is being instructed on a priority basis to have a member of his staff interview Mr. Karl Heinz Schleich at his residence [address deleted]. On the basis of the information obtained during the interview, the Department will be in a position to make a decision concerning the action which should be taken in this case.<sup>177</sup>

Morton repeated this letter to Mr. Lynch on August 29. On September 23, the American Consulate in Frankfurt, Germany reported that someone named

Schleich saw a man called Willy Baumeister in Kibischev, over a five month period, 1940-1949. No specific details on man's life, education, family. Memory hazy on description. . . . Believes man was an

<sup>177</sup>Letter from Thruston B. Morton to Senator Edward J. Thye, August 29, 1955, 611.61241/8-2955.

officer, rather sure he was an airman. . . . Russian guards called the man Baumeister. . . . Schleich said a second American was understood to be in the same camp. States he visited Baumeister several times. . . . Knows no details about the second man . . . if same crew with Baumeister or anything else.<sup>178</sup>

On September 30, 1955, the DoS notified the Embassy that the "presence of William Baumeister, American citizen reported in Soviet custody, has been sufficiently established to justify representations. Submit note along lines of previous notes concerning American citizens believed to be in Soviet custody including the following information:

**Willy Baumeister**, (William Baumeister, William Beaumeister, William George Baumeister, William George Beaumeister, William George Beaumister.) Seen in prison at Kuibischev during period 1943-1950. Born 1921.

Inform Department when delivered.<sup>179</sup>

The Embassy reported on October 3, "Note No. 234 delivered October 1."<sup>180</sup> On October 1, 1955, the American Embassy sent a note to the Soviet Foreign Ministry concerning Baumeister.

Note No. 234

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and with reference to previous Embassy notes on the subject of American citizens believed to be in Soviet custody has the honor to state that an American citizen, Willy Baumeister, born in 1921, was seen in a prison in Kuibyshev during the period from 1943-1950. Baumeister may be known to the competent Soviet authorities as William Baumeister, William Beaumister, William George Baumeister, William George Beaumeister, or William George Beaumister.

<sup>178</sup>From Frankfurt #182, to State (Confidential), September 23, 1955, 611.61241/9-2355.

<sup>179</sup>From State #392, to Moscow (Official Use Only), September 30, 1955, 611.61241/9-3055.

<sup>180</sup>From Moscow #803, to State (Official Use Only), October 3, 1955, 611.61241/10-355.

The Embassy is submitting this information in the expectation that it will facilitate the prompt release of the American citizen Baumeister.

The Embassy also wishes to renew its request for information concerning other American citizens believed to be in Soviet custody and who have been the subject of previous Embassy notes.<sup>181</sup>

The DoS immediately informed the family that "the repatriated German prisoner-of-war who believes he might have seen your son in the Soviet Union" was unable to provide information that would make it

possible to establish definitely the identity of the alleged American whom he saw in Kuibischev. Realizing, however, how vital this matter is to you and your family, the Department instructed the American Embassy at Moscow to make representations to the Soviet Government with a view to obtaining the release of the Willy Baumeister reported by Mr. Schleich as being in Soviet custody. A note to this effect was delivered to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs on October 1. It is requested that the Department's actions be kept confidential by the family and that no notice thereof be given to the press since untimely publicity might prejudice our representations in this case.<sup>182</sup>

On October 28, 1955, the Deputy Chairman of the Committee of State Security wrote to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR that "Baumeister, ada Bomeister-Bomeister William, Willy, George, has not been located among those arrested and serving sentences in the USSR."<sup>183</sup>

On December 7, Senator Hubert Humphrey wrote to the DoS on behalf of the Baumeister family. Senator Humphrey noted,

<sup>181</sup>From Moscow #392, to State (Official Use Only), October 3, 1955.

<sup>182</sup>Letter from Robert O. Blake, Acting Officer in Charge of USSR Affairs, to Mr. Baumeister, October 6, 1955 611.61241/10-655.

<sup>183</sup>Memorandum from Deputy Chairman of the Committee of State Security K. Lunev (Top Secret) to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in the USSR Comrade V. A. Zorin, October 28, 1955, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

I quite realize the difficulties inherent in this type of case, but I feel that we should continue to press for information from the Soviet authorities. This is an infinitely distressing case to the parents, Mr. and Mrs. Baumeister. Again I urge that no stone be left unturned to determine once and for all whether or not the man reported by Karl Schleich is indeed Lieutenant William Baumeister of St. Paul.<sup>184</sup>

Ambassador Bohlen reported on that "follow up Note No. 401 on Baumeister was delivered on December 19."<sup>185</sup> The DoS responded to Senator Humphrey on December 23, pointing out that the

American Embassy at Moscow made representations to the Soviet Government on October 1 and November 2, 1955 requesting information concerning Lieutenant Baumeister and his release from custody. In accordance with the Department's instructions, the Embassy sent a follow-up note to the Soviet Government with regard to this case on December 19.<sup>186</sup> . . . We have given no intimation to the Soviet Government that any doubt exists as to the identity of the alleged American in the Soviet Union. It was our belief, however, that in fairness to the parents of Lieutenant Baumeister we should inform them that when interviewed by our officials at Frankfurt Mr. Schleich was not as positive in the identification as in his letters to the family. The delay experienced in obtaining a reply from the Soviet Government is in accord with that Government's customary handling of cases of this character . . . . You can assure Mr. and Mrs. Baumeister that the Department of State and the Embassy at Moscow will exhaust every means which

<sup>184</sup>Letter from Senator Hubert H. Humphrey to Assistant Secretary of State Thruston B. Morton, December 7, 1955, 611.61241/12-755.

<sup>185</sup>From Moscow #1377, to State (Official Use Only), December 19, 1955, 611.61241/12-1955.

<sup>186</sup>"Send followup note to the Soviet Government on William Baumeister including the following additional information which appears to establish his presence in the U.S.S.R. In the summer of 1949 Baumeister worked at a cast iron factory where household supplies were manufactured; his job was to take finished product from molds and stack them in piles. The factory is located approximately twenty or twenty-five minutes by truck from the camp at Kubishchev where Baumeister was housed." From State #717, to Moscow (Official Use Only), December 16, 1955, 611.61241/12-1655.

might be useful in obtaining information about their son and his eventual return to his parents.<sup>187</sup>

On December 20, the Deputy Director of the Department of the Countries of America at the Foreign Ministry reported to the Chief of the Second Main Directorate of the KGB,

The U.S. Embassy has gotten in touch with the MFA of the USSR through a new note which contains a request to pass on information about an American citizen, Baumeister, who is presumably being detained in the Soviet Union. In the note it says that in 1949 Baumeister was working in one of the foundries near Kuibyshev. In connection with this new appeal from the Embassy, I request that you order a supplementary investigation concerning Baumeister. Please inform the MFA of the USSR about the results of your investigation.<sup>188</sup>

On February 6, 1956, the "Soviet Government informed our Embassy at Moscow" that "William George Baumeister is not on Soviet territory."<sup>189</sup> Note No. 14/osa from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the U.S. Embassy at Moscow noted that in "connection with Embassy Notes No. 314 of 9 November and No. 348 of 23 November, 1955," the Soviet government had made an "investigation conducted by appropriate Soviet agencies." The Soviet government concluded that "U.S. citizens Charles Demmler, Verta Elizabeth Thompson, and William George Baumeister are not on Soviet territory." Note No. 14 repeated the information forwarded in the Ministry's Note No. 75 of August 19, 1955, that "U.S. citizens Serni (or Gzherni, Charni, Cherni, or Chenni) and Kushman (or Koshman, Kochman) are not on Soviet territory which has also been confirmed by a supplementary investigation." The note confirmed that "although it has been established that U.S. citizen Sidney Ray Sparks is serving a sentence for crimes against the USSR . . . a decision has been made to release Sparks and

<sup>187</sup>Letter from Assistant Secretary Thruston B. Morton to Senator Hubert Humphrey, December 23, 1955, 611.61241/12-755.

<sup>188</sup>Memorandum from Deputy Director of the Department of the Countries of America V. Bazykin (Secret), to Chief of the Second Main Directorate of the KGB Comrade P. V. Fedotov, December 20, 1955, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>189</sup>Letter from Assistant Secretary Thruston B. Morton to Senator Edward J. Thye, February 17, 1956, 611.61241/2-1755.

to transfer him to U.S. authorities."<sup>190</sup> Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs Note No. 79/9, dated February 22, 1956, to Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko states the following:

The USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs hereby informs you that U.S. citizen Sidney Ray Sparks on February 17 of this year in Berlin under a legal statement was transferred to the representative of U.S. authorities Lt. Col. HAMONDS.

During the transfer no complaints were registered.<sup>191</sup>

The effort to obtain information about Sparks from Soviet sources was successful. The search for Lt. Baumeister in the Soviet Union was not, but this was not due to a lack of effort on the part of the Department of State.

Senator Humphrey wrote to the DoS in late February 1956 to express his gratitude for

the information relating that the Soviet Union has notified the Department that William G. Baumeister is not in Soviet territory. I well realize that in the face of this flat denial by the Soviet authorities, little hope can be given to the parents of Baumeister. Nevertheless, I do not feel that all hope should be relinquished that Baumeister is still alive in the Soviet Union. Further information from returning prisoners of war and other intelligence may one day be forthcoming. Therefore, I ask that the State Department continue to use every possible means to ascertain the true facts in the case.<sup>192</sup>

The DoS assured Senator Humphrey "that Lieutenant Baumeister's case will be kept in mind and that every possible effort will be made to obtain information concerning him from persons repatriated from the Soviet Union and from any other source."<sup>193</sup>

<sup>190</sup>Soviet Foreign Ministry Note No. 14, February 4, 1956, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>191</sup>Memorandum from Minister of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union Dydorov (Secret) to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Comrade A. A. Gromyko, February 22, 1956, "Kozyrev-Baker 1991."

<sup>192</sup>Letter from Senator Hubert H. Humphrey to Assistant Secretary Robert C. Hill, February 20, 1956, 611.61241/2-2056.

<sup>193</sup>Letter from Acting Assistant Secretary Roderic L. O'Connor to Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, March 8, 1956 611.61241/2-2056.



In November 1957, the Baumeister case was included in a report prepared by the Commanding General, U.S. Army, Pacific, that established the positive identification of Lieutenant Baumeister's remains. The letter to the Baumeister family summarized eyewitness accounts of how Lt. Baumeister's P-38 was seen plunging toward the earth after an attack by enemy aircraft over Burma on November 19, 1944. The Sub Inspector of Police at Khywe in the Thaton District of Burma "stated that he personally buried the remains of a Lieutenant Baumeister" after removing "certain items of personal effects." From the information contained on what was thought to be an Army Identification card and a diary, the identity of the deceased pilot was learned.<sup>194</sup> The effects were stored at the police inspector's home until 1945 when the Japanese raided his house and arrested the inspector's "father and confiscated all of his possessions including the effects recovered from the plane crash." On June 27, 1957, the former police inspector led an American Search Team and over 100 members of the Burmese Army to the crash site.

While Lieutenant Baumeister's remains were declared nonrecoverable in January 1948, his case was reopened in the Fall of 1954. At that time information was received from the Air Attaché at Rangoon, Burma, concerning the possible location of Lieutenant Baumeister's grave, as reported by British Graves Registration Personnel in that area. The Commanding General, U.S. Army, Pacific, was immediately asked to be prepared to follow up on the report, as soon as conditions in Burma would safely permit.<sup>195</sup>

Because of the political instability, distance, and lengthy agenda, the investigation took some time. "The search party recovered fragmentary human remains" that were identified as those of Lt. Baumeister. The remains were transferred to the United States Mortuary in Hawaii for further examination. Lt. Baumeister's "medical and den-

<sup>194</sup>A detailed description of how U.S. aircraft are retrieved from crash sites in Papua New Guinea and how remains are identified at the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii is found in Susan Sheehan, *A Missing Plane* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1986).

<sup>195</sup>Letter from Lt. Colonel R. J. Thomas, Acting Chief, Memorial Division, to the Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State, May 10, 1957, 611.61241/5-1057. Baumeister's father was immediately informed of these developments by the DoS in a letter from Robert O. Blake, Officer-in-Charge, USSR Affairs, to Mr. William G. Baumeister, May 29, 1957, 611.61241/5-1057.

tal records were, meanwhile, made available to our identification personnel in Hawaii . . . . The examinations, which were performed under the direction of pathologists and other identification specialists, established the recovered remains were of one individual. The available teeth compared very favorably" with those of Lt. Baumeister.<sup>196</sup> "The father was asked to give us instructions for disposition of the remains. . . . Mr. Baumeister has informed [the Memorial Division] in a letter received on 5 November 1957 that he wished his son's remains to be interred in the Fort Snelling National Cemetery, Minneapolis, Minnesota."<sup>197</sup>

Eyewitness reports of a Baumeister alive in the GULAG are consistent with those derived from a single source: the testimony of Karl Heinz Schleich, a German citizen repatriated from the Soviet Union. Schleich's memory of events and the circumstances under which they were reported are as shaky as these assertions about Baumeister. It has never been established, for example, whether Schleich's "original report concerning Lieutenant Baumeister was a voluntary account based on his experiences or whether it was the result of a question presented to him naming Baumeister specifically."<sup>198</sup> In an effort to obtain "all available information relative to this matter, an officer of the American Consulate General at Frankfurt, Germany interviewed Karl Heinz Schleich at his residence" in September 1955. The DoS report of this interview contained the following information:

Schleich reported that he met two Americans, one named Willy Baumeister, during a five-month period 1940-1949 in a camp at Kuibyshev. His memory was hazy on Baumeister's description but he described him as being rather tall with dark hair and at that time to have been 25 to 28 years old. He had no specific details on

<sup>196</sup>Letter from Major Donald L. Wardle, Memorial Division, to Mr. and Mrs. William G. Baumeister, October 31, 1957.

<sup>197</sup>Letter from Colonel James G. Hattox, Chief, Memorial Division, to the Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State, November 7, 1957. Attached to Memorandum from Programs & Analysis Office, Memorial Division, Office of the Quartermaster General, to Director, Office of Special Consular Services, November 7, 1957, 611.61241 BAUMEISTER, WILLIAM G. Jr/11-757.

<sup>198</sup>Letter from Edward L. Freers, Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State, to Colonel Walter P. Scoggins, Chief, Memorial Division, Office of the Quartermaster General, Department of the Army, April 26, 1957, 611.61241/3-1557.

Baumeister's life, education, or family. He believed Baumeister was an airman and an officer, but was unsure whether he was captured. Schleich vaguely recalled that Baumeister wore remnants of an unidentifiable military uniform. Schleich said he often rode to work in the same truck with Baumeister; that they worked together occasionally but that he did not know him intimately.

In another interview Schleich stated that Baumeister was of the Caucasian race, 25 to 30 years old, 5'11" to 6'1" and weighed 150 to 160 pounds. Schleich said Baumeister worked at an unidentified cast iron factory located twenty or twenty-five minutes by truck from the camp at Kulbyshev, where household supplies were manufactured; and that his work consisted of taking the finished product from the mold and stacking it in piles. Schleich said he was employed as a foreman in the same factory but in a different section. He said he nevertheless came in contact with Baumeister several times during the day. He further stated that Baumeister had told him he was in the United States Air Force and that it was rumored in the camp that Baumeister was captured in Asia.

Schleich was unable to identify a picture of Lieutenant Baumeister, which had been sent to him by the Baumeister family, as the Willy Baumeister he had seen in prison. He stated the man in the picture was younger and well-fed.

When interviewed by United States Government officials, Karl Heinz Schleich was not as definite in his identification of Willy Baumeister as he had been in letters to the Baumeister family. The American Embassy at Moscow nevertheless made three representations to the Soviet Government on this case, namely, on October 1, November 9, and December 17, 1955. On February 4, 1956, the Soviet Government informed us that William George Baumeister was not on Soviet territory.

Up to the present time, the Department had received no reports other than those from Karl Heinz Schleich concerning a person named Baumeister. Should any information be received which would enable the Department to supplement the information already given to the Soviet Government, the Department would give consideration to re-opening the case.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>199</sup>Freers to Scoggins, April 26, 1957.

Thus the investigation of the Baumeister case came to an end, though some Americans continued to assert in the 1990s that the case was not resolved adequately.

### The Hopkins Case

On October 10, 1955, the DoS instructed the American Embassy at Bonn to follow up information indicating that "alleged American citizens referred to as Harry Hopkins and Johnny Hopkins are imprisoned in the Soviet Union. It is desired to establish whether or not Klaus Friedrich Glaubitz, a German national recently released by the Soviet Government as an American citizen named Charles Frederick Hopkins, is the person referred to" in despatch No. 83 from the United States Political Adviser at Heidelberg entitled, "Americans Imprisoned in the USSR." The DoS instructed that the source of the information be "shown a picture of Klaus Friedrich Glaubitz with a view to determining whether or not he is the man" who was seen in the Soviet Union in February 1955 "who stated his name was Harry Hopkins."<sup>200</sup>

Reports concerning four Americans, two who had already been released and two new cases, were received in November and December. On November 2, a repatriated German called at the American Consulate General in Hamburg and reported that he had been imprisoned at Vorkuta, USSR, in September 1952 with William Verdine and with Homer Cox. The source said that in March 1955 he was in Jawas, a camp about 400 kilometers east-southeast of Moscow known as Potma-Jawas (Camp district 385, camp number 11), where he met two Americans. The first, Simon Leonovici Valatka, left Lithuania in 1912, lived in Philadelphia, and returned to Lithuania in 1930 under a U.S. passport in the name Simon Willics. In 1939, when it was impossible to return to the United States, he used his father's name, Simanas Valatka. In 1944, he was arrested by the Counter Espionage Service of the Soviet Army.<sup>201</sup> Another German reported that he had been in International Camp No. 6062/XIII at Kiew-Darnizza

<sup>200</sup>From Bonn #CA-2849, to State (Confidential), October 10, 1955, 611.61251/10-1055.

<sup>201</sup>From AMCONGEN Hamburg, to State (Official Use Only), November 4, 1955.

where he met an American, William George Robertson, in March 1955.<sup>202</sup>

The DoS continued to follow the Hopkins case in 1956. The DoS instructed the American Embassy at Bonn to obtain information about the identity of Glaubitz. This was prompted by a report from the American Embassy at Paris that "a recent French repatriate" reported "the presence of an American named Hopkins at Camp Eleven at Yavaz near Potma at least from April 2, 1955 to August 19, 1955 when the source left the camp. Hopkins is described as being a civilian about 35 years of age who occupied the fourth bed on the right on the first floor of the barracks there. It is possible that the information actually concerns Glaubitz, however, and he should be questioned about this in any interview."<sup>203</sup> In March, U.S. authorities were able to obtain information from two former prisoners about Hopkins. The first identified Hopkins as Klaus Friedric Glaubitz from a photograph but could offer no explanation why Glaubitz used such an alias. The second piece of information, shared by the British Intelligence Office at Goettingen, substantiated the assertion that Hopkins and Glaubitz were "one and the same."<sup>204</sup>

The clincher was an interview with Glaubitz that took place at the request of the American Embassy at Bonn. In a note dated June 25, 1956, the German Foreign Office reported that Glaubitz said:

I, Klaus Friedrich Glaubitz, born in Koenigsberg/East Prussia, on December 31, 1927, was arrested on June 29, 1947 while interpreting for Allied units and was abducted, while unconscious, to Wismar in Mecklenburg (Soviet Occupied Zone). During my pre-trial detention in Schwerin until October 1948, I fought for my name, but was compelled to admit that my name was Hopkins, Harry Charles. Under this name I arrive in Brest in 1950, was held there in the transit camp for two months and proceeded to the peninsula of Taimir (Norilsk), where I was compelled to work until the end of 1951. From December 1951 until August 24, 1955, I was an inmate of Camps 7 and 11 in Windrej and Jawas near Potma. I am 28

<sup>202</sup>From AMCONGEN Hamburg, to State (Confidential), December 16, 1955, 611.61241/12-1655.

<sup>203</sup>From State #CA-5788, to Bonn (Confidential), February 1, 1956, 611.61251/2-156.

<sup>204</sup>From Bonn #1853, to State (Confidential), March 6, 1956, 611.61251/3-656.

today. . . . Perfect knowledge of Russian, English, French, Spanish, and Polish.<sup>205</sup>

Thus the case of Harry Hopkins the alleged American came to a close.

### **Public Unawareness of U.S. Efforts**

The efforts made by the U.S. government to obtain information about Americans held illegally in the USSR were not widely known or appreciated as the following letter to a Member of Congress from an irate AMVETS commander demonstrates:

Just a few months ago a newspaper reporter was released from behind the Iron Curtain. He was released because of the insistence of a power press in his behalf.

The undersigned, a member of the AMVETS (American Veterans of World War II and Korea), is wondering what is being done about the common GI's who are still detained as prisoners of war. We are not at war with China, Russia or anybody else. Why are our buddies still behind the Iron Curtain instead of being at home with their folks where they belong?

We wonder what is in the minds of our brothers in arms behind the Curtain. What do they think now of the vaunted power of these great United States. Seemingly their only 'mistake' was being a good soldier for their Country and now their Country is allowing them to languish—unaided.

As a member of AMVETS, I protest our Country's seeming unawareness of their plight, I shout at the top of my voice with all of my strength for you in Washington, our elected caretakers, to do something about this most shameful page in our history.

The AMVETS will not be satisfied until every last American Service Person be released and be home with their families.

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<sup>205</sup>From Bonn #314, to State (Confidential), October 10, 1955, 611.61251/8-2856.

What are you doing about it?<sup>206</sup>

The Congressman responded by pointing out, "I do not believe it is quite accurate to speak of 'our country's seeming unawareness of their plight.' I have conferred with officials of the State Department about this matter and I know that a determined effort has been made to have our boys released."<sup>207</sup> The Congressman notified the DoS about this protest, which resulted in a response less than two weeks later. According to the DoS

we are unaware of any case involving the recent release of a newspaper reporter from behind the Iron Curtain. It is possible that your constituent refers to the case of William N. Oatis, United States foreign correspondent, who was unjustly arrested by the Czechoslovak Government on April 23, 1951. Insistent and determined efforts on the part of the United States Government, together with an aroused public opinion, from the time of his arrest, including a series of oral and written representations and other vigorous measures particularly in the economic field, finally led to his release in 1953. . . . With regard to the question of United States personnel captured in Korea, the Department of Defense has informed us that all American servicemen, missing or unaccounted for in that conflict have been presumed dead. In close cooperation with the Department of Defense, however, we intend to continue to seek information from the Communists about their fate. *Further, we have no evidence that any United States personnel captured in Korea were ever taken to the Soviet Union.*<sup>208</sup>

Once again the DoS was faced with the dilemma posed by the need for discretion on the one hand and public relations on the other. The DoS consistently chose the path that promised the greatest chance that American citizens would be released.

The DoS passed along information to families about the release of their relatives. The news was not always good. In January 1956, the

<sup>206</sup>Letter from W. C. Belote, Commander, AMVETS Post No. 89, Columbus, Ohio, to Congressman John M. Vorys, January 16, 1956.

<sup>207</sup>Letter from Congressman Vorys to Mr. W. C. Belote, January 21, 1956.

<sup>208</sup>Letter from Assistant Secretary Thruston B. Morton to Congressman Vorys, February 10, 1955, 611.61241/1-2156. Emphasis added.

brother of Charles August Demmler, who was reported missing in action in Germany in 1944, wrote to the DoS to inquire whether any information had been received from the Soviet Government as to whether "the person reported as 'Dimmler' or 'Deumbler' by released prisoners-of-war" was in Soviet custody. The DoS wrote:

Although the records of the Department of Defense list your brother as killed in action in Germany in 1944 and buried in Belgium, we were hopeful that by some chance he might have survived. For this reason we made representations to the Soviet Government on July 6, November 8, and December 17, 1955 in the hope of learning that your brother was alive and in the Soviet Union. I deeply regret that the Soviet Government informed our Embassy at Moscow on February 6, 1956 that 'Charles Demmler' is not on Soviet territory. In view of this report from the Soviet Government it is extremely doubtful whether further efforts on our part would bring to light information concerning your brother. However, should we receive any information *that might justify reopening this matter*, either on your brother's behalf or relative to any other person, I assure you that we will do so.<sup>209</sup>

When there was good news, such as in the case of the release of Sidney Ray Sparks, the DoS was quick to inform relatives.<sup>210</sup>

#### **Additional Reports of U.S. Airmen in USSR**

In the middle of 1956, there was renewed interest in the fate of U.S. airmen lost in previous years after their aircraft were shot down by Soviet forces. On July 16, the U.S. government sent a note to the Soviet government. The note was based on reports received by the U.S. government from persons of various nationalities repatriated from Soviet detention camps and prisons who reported that they had heard of or had seen American airmen in various places of detention in the Soviet Union. The U.S. government was not pursuing reports indicating that specific individuals were being held. In a letter written in response to one written by the brother of a missing flyer,

<sup>209</sup>Letter from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., Officer in Charge, USSR Affairs, to Mrs. Glendening, February 17, 1956, FW611.61241/1-456.

<sup>210</sup>Telegram from Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., Officer in Charge, USSR Affairs, February 7, 1956, 611.61241/2-756.



Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Robert Murphy noted:

In no case, however, although the Department of State and the interested agencies of this Government made vigorous investigations to the extent possible, was any individual American airman identified or described sufficiently so that an identification could be made of him. The records of the Department of the Navy and the Department of the Air Force, as reported to this Department, showed however that two aircraft had departed from foreign bases on peaceful missions and failed to return, one of them being a B-29 which left Yokota Air Force Base in Japan on June 13, 1952 and has never been heard from since.

The names of the crew members of these two aircraft were given in the note to the Soviet Government first, to facilitate the search by the Soviet Government of its own records, and secondly, so that other repatriates who may have additional information may come forward and perhaps more fully identify any individual airman of whose detention they became aware while in the Soviet Union.

I assure you that there is no information in this Department, or in this Government, with specific respect to the detention of your brother, Captain James A. Sculley. But every effort will continue to be made to press the Soviet Government for affirmative information on the identity of the American aviation personnel they may be holding. You may be certain that you will be informed promptly of any development which occurs.<sup>211</sup>

Under Secretary Murphy's response, which was sent one week after the request for information was written, included "a copy of the Department of State Press Release of July 16, 1956 in which the actual text of the note to the Soviet Government is given." The DoS received a similar inquiry on August 2 about Danny Pillsbury, another airman mentioned in the July 16 note to the Soviet government. A reply, including the press release, was sent to Congressman Brooks, who forwarded the inquiry, on August 22, 1956.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>211</sup>Letter from Deputy Under Secretary of State Robert Murphy to Mr. Joseph J. Sculley, July 25, 1956, 611.61241/6-1856.

<sup>212</sup>Letter from Acting Assistant Secretary Roderic L. O'Connor to Congressman Jack Brooks, August 22, 1956, 611.61241/8-256.

Acting Secretary Murphy wrote to Senator Walter F. George, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, to follow up a Committee hearing on July 18 that addressed the Committee's "investigation of the circumstances leading to our representation to the Soviet Government concerning the possible Soviet detention of survivors of United States aircraft incidents." Murphy promised after that hearing "to keep the Committee informed of any developments on this subject." Murphy informed Senator George:

The Soviet Government on August 13 replied to our note of July 16, informing the Embassy at Moscow that a "careful investigation" has revealed that "no American citizens from the American Air Force or Naval Air Force are on Soviet territory." The Soviet Government further stated that its investigation causes it to doubt that the Embassy's representation has any basis in fact. It made the observation that the United States Government was apparently misinformed by persons who are attempting by false information to hinder the development of normal relations between the Soviet Union and the United States.

While no one has yet come forward with any information bearing on the identity of the men alleged to have survived, we are hoping that the action which we have taken and the publicity subsequent thereto will result eventually in our obtaining evidence of this nature.

In spite of the negative character of the Soviet reply, we will continue to keep further approaches on this matter under consideration. We will inform the Committee should any new information come to light and further action be taken.<sup>213</sup>

On September 22, 1956, an American note that focused on Technical Sergeant Lawrence Edward Reitz was delivered:

Note No. 263

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and refers to the Embassy's Notes No. 282 of

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<sup>213</sup>Letter from Acting Secretary Robert Murphy to Senator Walter F. George, Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee, August 17, 1956, 611.61241/8-2156.

May 29, 1953 and No. 600 of January 14, 1954, and the Ministry's Note No. 20/OSA of June 4, 1953, in reply thereto with reference to the whereabouts of Technical Sergeant Lawrence Edward Reitz.

The Ministry stated in its note of June 4, 1953, that efforts to determine the whereabouts of Sergeant Reitz had been unsuccessful. The Embassy brings the following additional information to the attention of the Ministry in the hope that it will now be possible to locate Sergeant Reitz.

Sergeant Reitz was a member [illegible]. He is reported to have been captured by the German Army, to have been hospitalized in Rumania, and to have been subsequently imprisoned in Stalag III B in Luckenwalde, Germany.

American citizens who were prisoners of war at Stalag III B in Luckenwalde, have informed the American Government that Sergeant Reitz was seen in this prison in September 1944 and in February and March 1945.

A German who was recently repatriated from the Soviet Union has informed the authorities of the United States Government that he was imprisoned with Sergeant Reitz at Vorkuta from August 4, 1952 until the spring of 1954; that as camp barber he shaved Sergeant Reitz twice a week and cut his hair once a month; that in the spring of 1954 Sergeant Reitz was transferred from Vorkuta.

The Embassy requests the Ministry to make an ex-[illegible] in the Soviet Union of Sergeant Lawrence Reitz and restoring him to his family and friends.<sup>214</sup>

On October 22, 1956, the embassy received a reply to Note No. 263 concerning Sergeant Reitz. The note simply said, "the competent Soviet authorities have no information about the American citizen Lawrence E. Reitz."<sup>215</sup>

The Department of State also looked for help from the American Red Cross to enlist the assistance of the Alliance of the Red Cross and the

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<sup>214</sup>Attached to from Moscow #650, to State (Official Use Only), September 22, 1956, 611.61241/9-2256.

<sup>215</sup>From Moscow #239, to State (Official Use Only), October 22, 1956, 611.61241/10-2256.

Red Crescent Societies in the search for information concerning "American citizens who are reported to have been seen in Soviet prisons." The American Red Cross expressed a willingness to "make welfare and whereabouts inquiries about American citizens in this category." To assist the Red Cross, the Director of the Office of Eastern European Affairs Edward L. Freers sent "a list of American citizens who are believed to be held in Soviet custody at the present time. All of these persons are the subject of current representations from the American Embassy to the Soviet Government with a view to obtaining information concerning them, and their release and early repatriation to the United States." Freers also included "the name of the nearest American relative" to be used if any information came to light. The "List of American citizens reported seen in Soviet prisons" included the following names:

1. **William George Baumeister.** (Variously reported as Willy Baumeister, William Beumeister, William Beaumister, William George Baumeister, William George Beaumister, William George Beaumeister.) William George Baumeister is reported to have been seen in prison in Kuibyshev during the period 1943 to 1950. He is reported to have worked in the summer of 1949 in a cast iron factory where household supplies are manufactured. His job was to take the finished products from the mold and stack them in piles. The factory was located approximately twenty to twenty-five minutes by truck from the camp at Kuibyshev where Baumeister was housed. [Nearest relative deleted.]
2. **Walter Ciszek (Father Walter Ciszek).** Father Ciszek is a Roman Catholic priest of the Jesuit Order. While serving as a priest of the Jesuit Order in Poland in 1941, Father Ciszek was taken into custody by the Soviet authorities and deported to Siberia. He is reported to be in prison in Norilsk, Krasnoyarski Krai, by a person recently repatriated from Norilsk. [Nearest relative deleted.]
3. **Charles August Demmler (Dimmler or Duembler).** The reports concerning this individual have referred to him by last name only. There is a possibility that the reports refer to Private Charles August Demmler, missing in action in Germany in 1944. The Department of State is not informed regarding the whereabouts in the Soviet Union of this individual. [Nearest relative deleted.]
4. **Arthur Joseph DeRoche.** A private in the United States forces in Austria, he disappeared on July 20, 1950 and was reported seen in

Soviet prisons at St. Valentin, Mallon, and Baden in the former Soviet Zone of Austria. [Nearest relative deleted.]

5. **Dora Gershonowitz.** Dora Gershonowitz was born in Paterson, New Jersey April 23, 1922 of Polish parents. She was taken to the Soviet Union in August 1933 by her mother, who went to join her husband who became a Soviet citizen in 1934. Dora Gershonowitz became a Soviet citizen by Soviet retroactive interpretation of a Soviet law of 1938 which provides that all children under 14 follow the parents' nationality.

Dora Gershonowitz made application to renounce Soviet citizenship in 1941, 1943, and 1945. She applied for permission to leave the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1946 and repeatedly thereafter until 1950. She was employed by the American Embassy at Moscow from 1945-1950.

She was arrested in May 1950 and sentenced to four years' imprisonment by a Soviet court; the sentence was reduced to two years under an amnesty. According to reports received from foreigners repatriated from the U.S.S.R., she is still in prison in Potma and is suffering from an advanced case of tuberculosis.

Her relatives in the United States have made frequent requests for intervention on her behalf. On August 22, 1956 the Embassy at Moscow requested the Soviet Government to obtain information concerning the present welfare and whereabouts of Miss Gershonowitz.

The Department has been informed that Mr. [deleted], Miss Gershonowitz's uncle, has requested the American Red Cross to use its good offices on behalf of Miss Gershonowitz. The relatives in the United States have not been told that Miss Gershonowitz has tuberculosis. [Nearest relative deleted.]

6. **Guy Allen Kerrick, Jr.** A private in the U.S. forces in Germany, he disappeared on July 29, 1950. He was at one time interned at Weimar and East Berlin. In the fall of 1955 he was seen in a Soviet prison in Bautzen, East Germany. [Nearest relative deleted.]

7. **William Patrick O'Ryan.** A private in the U.S. forces in Germany, he disappeared December 14, 1953. In the fall of 1955 he was reported to be imprisoned in Luchau, East Germany. [Nearest relative deleted.]

8. **Charles J. Scott.** A private in the U.S. forces in Germany, he disappeared December 4, 1951. In the fall of 1955 he was reported to be imprisoned at Bautzen, East Germany. [Nearest relative deleted.]

9. **Sgt. William J. Smallwood.** A sergeant in the U.S. forces in Germany, he disappeared on May 22, 1954. He was reported to be in Bautzen until about July 1954 and in the fall of 1955 to be in a prison located at 1a Dresdenerstrasse, Waldheim, East Germany. Sgt. Smallwood has a wife and two children in Kentucky. [Nearest relative deleted.]

10. **Major William Thompson.** U.S. Air Force Major William Thompson was reported seen in Budenskaya Prison near Moscow from 1944 to 1948. He was reported to have later transferred to Tayshet camp, compound 26. He informed a foreign returnee that he formerly lived in San Antonio. [Nearest relative deleted.]

11. **Robert Chester Wilson.** Robert Chester Wilson was an American civilian tourist, bearer of U.S. passport no. 23289, who disappeared in Vienna on January 13, 1951. In January 1952 he was seen in a prison at Mallon in the former Soviet Zone of Austria. [Nearest relative deleted.]

12. **Richard S. Winter.** Richard S. Winter was an American student who disappeared in Vienna in late September, 1950. [Nearest relative deleted.]<sup>216</sup>

The Red Cross was potentially an important source, since many prisoners filled out a Red Cross form in Soviet camps. (See Table 3.7 for a list of American citizens released from Soviet prisons in the 1950s.)

## EXPLOITATION OF U.S. RECOVERY POLICY

Some tried to exploit the U.S. government's policy. On October 15, 1957, a person without identification or any documentation came to

<sup>216</sup>Letter from Edward L. Freers to Mr. James T. Nicholson, Executive Vice President of the American National Red Cross, September 20, 1956, 611.61241/9-2056.

**Table 3.7****American Citizens Released from Soviet Prisons in the 1950s  
as a Result of U.S. Government Efforts (1956)**

	Name	Release Date
1.	Homer Cox	December 29, 1953
2.	Leland Towers	December 29, 1953
3.	John H. Noble	January 8, 1955
4.	William T. Marchuk	January 8, 1955
5.	William A. Verdine	January 20, 1955
6.	Wilfred C. Cumish	September 1955
7.	Charles Hopkins	September 1955
8.	Murray Filde (Feinhersh)	September 1955
9.	Sidney R. Sparks	February 17, 1956

the American Consulate in Strasbourg, France.<sup>217</sup> He presented himself as Richard Sawicki, a Polish citizen who claimed to have been held in the Soviet concentration camp of Bulun until July 1957.

After returning to Poland, Sawicki said he had escaped and was passing through Strasbourg on the way to Barcelona to join his mother who he said lived at Borta Nitella 174. Sawicki told consular officers that he knew of four Americans who were being held in the Bulun camp. The first, according to Sawicki, was "Jack Watson of Buffalo, New York, an American professor of physics who was captured by Russians in Vienna in 1949. The other three, "Dick Rozbicki, Stanley Warner, and Jan Sorow," were people Sawick said had been soldiers captured during the Korean War.<sup>218</sup> Consular officers asked native speakers of Polish from the College of Free Europe to talk with Sawicki. He was given food and shelter for the night and a

letter and the Paris office of the [College] was requested to receive him and assist him vis-à-vis the French authorities. However, on the day following his reception by the officials of the College, Zawicki stole an automobile that was later found wrecked and in

<sup>217</sup>From AmConsulate Strasbourg #24, to State (Limited Official Use), October 21, 1957, 611.61241/10-2157.

<sup>218</sup>These names do not appear on the UNCMAC list of unaccounted-for servicemen of whose fate the Communist forces were thought to have some knowledge.

which he left the letter provided by the College authorities. He is now being searched for by the French police. Of course, these circumstances throw a highly suspicious light on the whole of his story.

One month after Zawicki's surprise visit and disappearance in Strasbourg, the American Consul General in Barcelona reported to Washington that the address Zawicki said was his mother's address, Borta Nitella 174, did not exist. Further, "a careful search of our files fails to disclose any reference to anyone by the name of Sawicki. The name is not listed in the telephone directory."<sup>219</sup> The stories about Americans in the Bulun camp continued to be reported. In July 1958, an American Catholic priest, Father Archibal, reported to the U.S. Embassy in Paris that he had met a man named Ryszard Woykowski who claimed to have escaped recently from Camp 135 at Bulun. Woykowski "claimed to have been acquainted with two Americans in the same camp, a Reverend John Westley, chaplain, captured in Korea in 1952 and whose home address was given as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a First Lieutenant Stanley Rosbicki of 125 Brooklyn Avenue, Buffalo, New York." Though in the Embassy's judgment the story was "a fabrication," the Department of State was requested to contact the Buffalo address given and to contact the address in Madrid to determine whether Woykowski might be there.<sup>220</sup>

#### U.S. FOLLOWUP: 1991

On December 5, 1991, the U.S. government submitted data to the Russian government "concerning certain individuals who could have been detained in the Soviet Union in the 1950's."<sup>221</sup> The Russian

<sup>219</sup>From AmConGen Barcelona #41, to State (Limited Official Use), November 8, 1957, 611.61241/11-857.

<sup>220</sup>From U.S. Embassy Paris to State (Official Use Only), July 16, 1958, 611.61251/7-1658.

<sup>221</sup>The U.S. data were submitted by "Mr. Jim Collins." The Russian response, which included summaries and copies of Russian archive material, was given to Secretary of State James Baker by Foreign Minister Kozyrev. The citation noted here is from the coversheet. A request by the author of this RAND study for access to U.S. government files concerning bilateral communications between the Soviet and Russian governments on POW/MIA issues beyond 1959 was never acted on by ISA/POW/MIA Affairs. Original U.S. documents were not made available. This section is therefore based on the Russian government's response to the U.S. government's note.



response noted, "As a result of our research, we have uncovered a series of documents which shed light on the fate of those individuals; the documents are being passed over to the U.S. side as a gesture of goodwill." The Russian conclusions are as follows:

- Mr. Wilfred S. Kumish was handed over by Soviet authorities to the U.S. side in Berlin on September 5, 1955.
- Mr. Sidney Ray Sparks was handed over to U.S. authorities on 17 February 1956.
- Research conducted in 1955 established that U.S. citizens Verta Elizabeth Thompson and William Baumeister were not held on the territory of the Soviet Union.
- A B-29 aircraft was shot down June 13, 1952 to the south of Valentine Bay in the Far East. Members of the crew of that aircraft were not found by patrol ships or on-duty border guards.
- In relation to the crew of a B-50 aircraft (the incident occurred July 29, 1952 in the Sea of Japan), we have established that pick-up operations of the Americans were not carried out by the Soviet side.

Besides the remains of six crew members of a U.S. Air Force C-130 which crashed in the area of Yerevan September 2, 1958, and which were handed over to the U.S. side, we did not discover any other U.S. pilots<sup>222</sup> from that airplane.

- As to the question touched on by the U.S. side about the fate of Col. Serny and 1st Lt. Kushman, we would like to have more detailed data (year and place of birth, first names, etc.) which would allow us to provide a more definitive answer.<sup>223</sup>

The State Department request for information from the Russian government was made without careful research or adequate fact checking.

Two of the people the U.S. side asked about, Sparks and Cumish, had been returned to U.S. authorities nearly 36 years ago. The inquiry about Baumeister concerns a U.S. serviceman who died in 1944 and

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<sup>222</sup>The English word "crewmember" is often translated as "pilot" in Soviet notes.

<sup>223</sup>"Kozyrev-Baker 1991," coversheet.

was buried in Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1957. The State Department stopped making representations on behalf of "Col. Serny" by 1954, since it was impossible either to verify Serny's claim to U.S. citizenship or to believe the testimony of numerous witnesses who reported that Serny claimed to be responsible for "rounding up John Dillinger" and to know as well where the kidnapped Lindbergh baby had been hidden. Representations on behalf of "Kushman" were also stopped, apparently because it was impossible to relate the information obtained from repatriates to any U.S. citizen. A Department of State official, when asked why the note was so poorly researched, shrugged and remarked, "They asked for names so I flipped through a file and gave them some names."

The hand of those on the Russian side today who believe that the United States has a hidden agenda was strengthened by the U.S. note. The Russian government may have been led to believe that the U.S. government is not interested in resolving so-called discrepancy cases, since the requests that were made deal with shopworn issues resolved to the satisfaction of U.S. authorities decades ago. Suspicions already exist in Moscow that the search for American POW/MIAs is actually a smokescreen for intelligence-gathering operations. A similar concern has been voiced by the Vietnamese government, which labeled America's "excessive" demands as actually a "cloak for espionage."<sup>224</sup> The State Department request sent many misleading signals to Moscow.

#### **RECAP-WW: TRACKING U.S. DEFECTORS IN THE SOVIET BLOC**

During the Cold War, the U.S. government made a variety of efforts to determine whether American citizens were being held against their will in Soviet bloc countries. Since no distinction was made between military and civilians, the whereabouts of American citizens who defected to the Soviet bloc were identified. Many of these defectors were subjects of live sighting reports made by repatriated prisoners from various European and Asian countries. Defectors were

<sup>224</sup> Barbara Crossette, "Hanoi Aide Says U.S. Search for M.I.A.'s May Be Cover for Spying," *New York Times*, August 9, 1992.

sometimes returned as a result of their own volition or were repatriated as a consequence of U.S. government protests to the Soviet government.

The U.S. Army tracked the whereabouts of its defectors through the program known as "Return or Exchanged Captured American Personnel—World Wide," also known as RECAP-WW. From at least 1957 to 1962, the USA Industrial and Personnel Security Group (USAIPSG), located at Fort Holabird, Maryland, was responsible for holding and controlling dossiers, collecting and filing information, and making reports for the RECAP-WW program.

Every six months, in July and January, USAIPSG made a report to CI Branch, ACSI, of every case in which an individual had not been returned to military control or civilian custody. Although RECAP-WW dossiers were maintained by USAIPSG, many offices were unaware of their custodial role and the Army was not satisfied with its recordkeeping. On September 27, 1962, USAIPSG turned over all RECAP-WW dossiers to USACRF. Apparently the CI Branch, ACSI/DA, was then made responsible for the RECAP-WW program.<sup>225</sup>

The Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Counterintelligence Branch, Headquarters, United States Army, Europe, compiled as of August 6, 1959, a "List of Known United States Army Defectors in USAREUR." This and other lists of known defectors are shown in Appendix 22.

## CONCLUSION

Of the many American civilians and servicemen shown to have been last seen alive in Soviet custody following World War II, many cases remain unresolved.

Though one cannot exclude the possibility that American air crews were interned on Soviet territory during the Cold War, no evidence beyond that already in the public domain appears in this report. The status of defectors and traitors is of no interest to contemporary DoD authorities.

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<sup>225</sup>Memorandum from Lt. Col. William H. Collier, November 19, 1963, Subject: RECAP-WW Program (AR-380-230)